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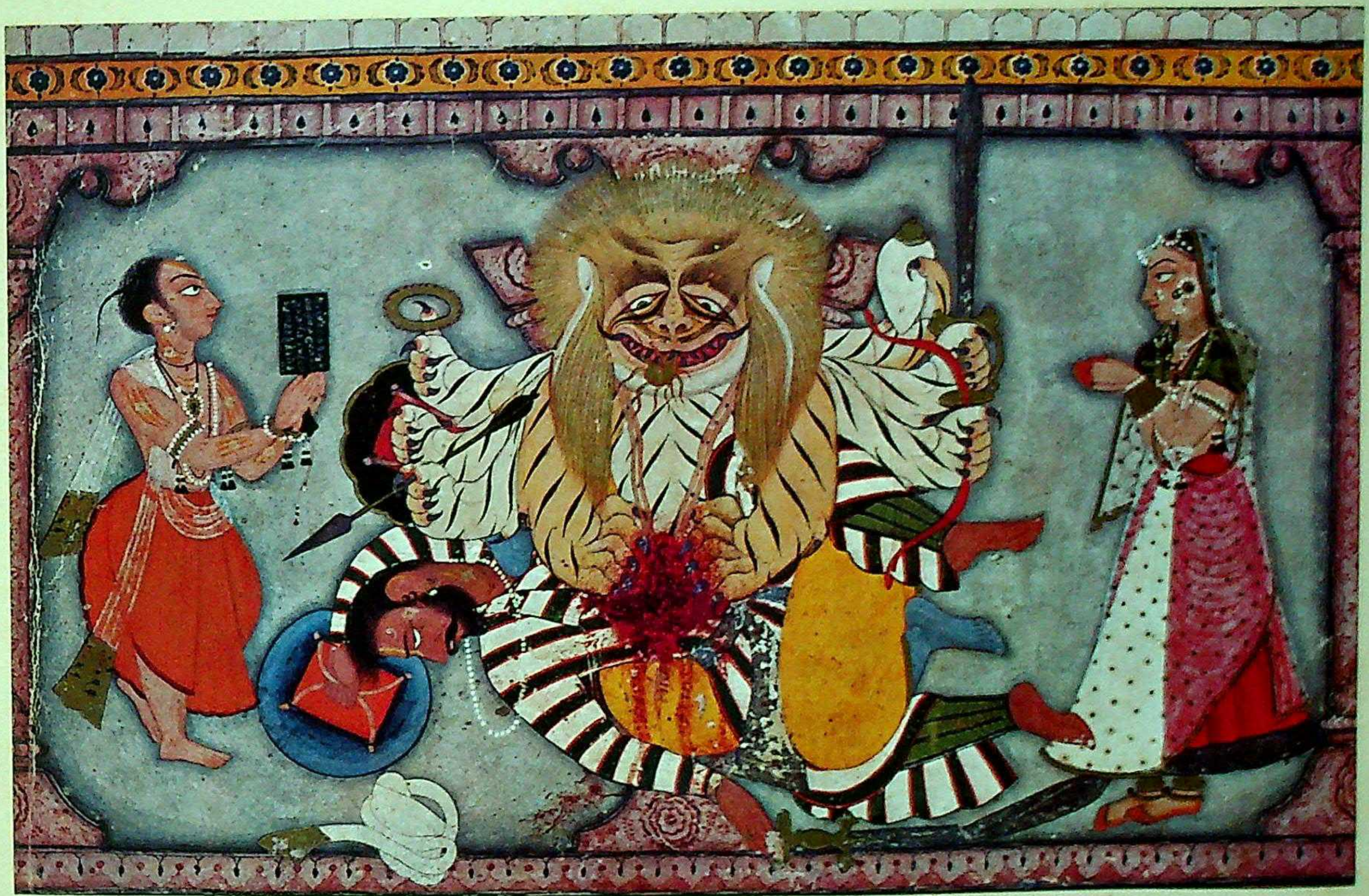

TEXT BY DOUGLAS BARRETT AND BASIL GRAY

Assistant Curator and Curator of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum

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Colour plate on the title page:
Narasimha Avatar (Vishnu as Man-Lion). Basohli
Style, about 1730. (6⅝ × 10⅜")
Jagdish Mittal Collection, Hyderabad

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INDIAN wall painting is too fragmentary for a real history to be written. One can only attempt to indicate a movement of style in the two great artistic provinces of the Deccan and South India. From there, prolonged study of two of the most important series, at Elura and Tanjore, remains difficult.

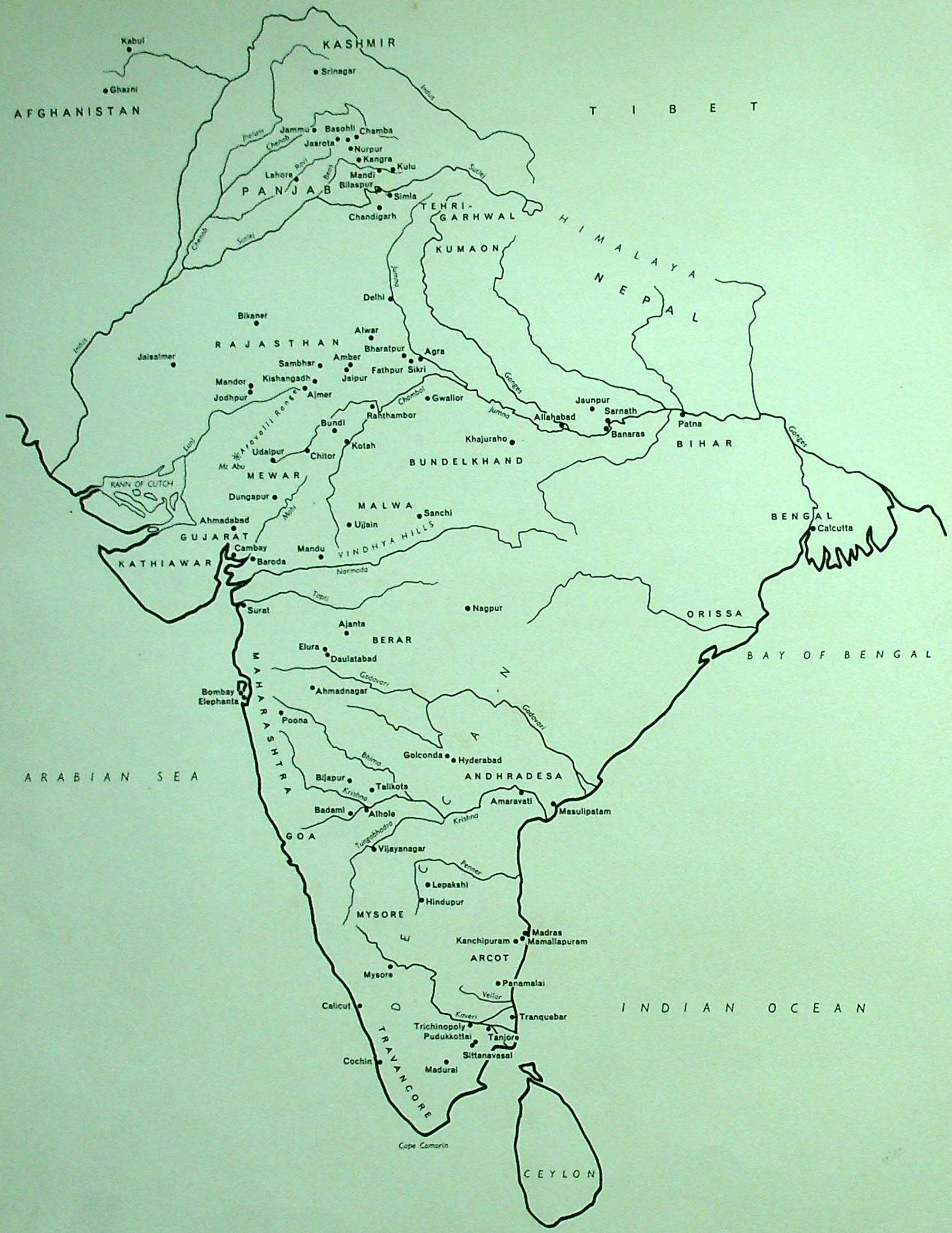
On the other hand, new documents of Indian miniature painting appear regularly. While it is wise at the moment to reserve judgement on all the major problems, it is essential to make it clear that they still exist and to state as objectively as possible what they are. The temptation to offer yet another solution of two of the most difficult, pre-Mughal and Pahari miniature painting, has however proved irresistible. Though we are in general agreement on all other questions, the attentive reader will appreciate that our views of the origin and status of Mughal painting somewhat diverge.

We wish to acknowledge the help and criticism of our friends and colleagues, especially Rai Krishnadasa, Karl Khandalawala, Moti Chandra, Anand Krishna, Pramod Chandra, D. P. Ghosh, M. S. Randhawa, S. Paramasivan, Herman Goetz, Richard Ettinghausen, S. C. Welch, W. G. Archer, Robert Skelton and Ralph Pinder Wilson.

We also wish to thank all the museum officials and private collectors, especially in India, who have made their paintings freely available for study and reproduction. We are especially grateful to Sri A. Ghosh, Director General of Archaeology in India, who gave permission for photography at the sites under his supervision.

We dedicate this book to Rai Krishnadasa and Karl Khandalawala in the hope that they will find it acceptable.

DOUGLAS BARRETT AND BASIL GRAY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INTRODUCTION

1

WALL PAINTING

2

MINIATURE PAINTING

THE PRE-MUGHAL PERIOD

THE MUGHAL SCHOOL

Text by Basil Gray

DECCANI PAINTING IN THE STATES OF AHMADNAGAR, BIJAPUR AND GOLCONDA

Text by Basil Gray

THE SCHOOLS OF RAJASTHAN

THE SCHOOLS OF THE PANJAB HILLS

fifteenth century, their religious architecture, though often originally planned, and with detail of excellent craftsmanship, illustrates the slow and prolonged decline of the classical tradition. Probably their secular buildings would tell a rather different story, if more were available for study. In painting however there is one tradition which can be closely followed from the end of the classical period into the sixteenth century. The illustrated books, most of which are scriptures of the Jain religion and are preserved in the libraries of the Jain community of Western India, provide a wealth of material but remain difficult to interpret. At first sight they indicate a development not unlike that of the Hindu architecture but more lively and adept because continuously patronized by a rich community. The hand is brilliantly assured but uninventive. But, as we shall see, there are illustrated books which suggest that this is not the whole truth; that outside the restricting and conservative iconography this style was capable, given the environment and patronage, of a wide extension of its range and expressiveness. Both environment and patronage were provided by at least one Hindu state, which by the fifteenth century had fought its way to a confident and powerful position in North India despite encirclement by Muslim powers. The style, which will be attributed to the state of Mewar in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, belongs in effect to the final phase of classical painting in North India, in which the men and women and nature of the classical period have been reduced to an elaborate set of formal symbols given life and meaning by the purely emotive use of line and colour. To speak of "distortion," as some critics have done, is to miss the point. Distortion involves a reference to nature: this was a movement within the style itself. The art of the Muslim period should therefore be regarded as two streams from the same source, divergent because they developed under differing conditions of society and patronage. In architecture the rules of the classical period are genuinely revitalized by their application to Muslim plans and forms of construction. In painting the final phase of the classical period continues to evolve where an emergent Hindu state can provide the patronage.

The sixteenth century saw a fresh wave of Muslim invaders into North India, the Mughals, and the beginning of the second period of post-classical art to which they have given their name. Unlike their predecessors, the early Mughals, especially Akbar and Jahangir, tried to unite the Hindu states to the Delhi court not merely by force of arms but by a wise policy of intermarriage and mutual assistance. Apart from a few states like Jaipur which were close to Delhi, this policy was only partially successful. The Hindu states in Rajasthan and the Panjab Hills accepted the privileges of wealth and position they were offered and gave honest service in return, but were in no doubt that their suzerain was a foreigner and a Muslim. However, for about a hundred years, until the accession of Aurangzeb, the division between the two societies in North India was a little less clearly marked than it had been. Again, unlike their predecessors, the Mughals with their Timurid background and culture were fond of painting. Humayun, in exile, knew Safavid Persian painting at first hand and persuaded two artists to return to India with him. But into Akbar's ateliers, organized for a prolific output, it was necessary to recruit Indian artists in large numbers. The Persian strain in the painting of Akbar's reign, occasionally reinforced by new arrivals, is clear. It is however quickly transformed, and in its earliest examples Mughal painting is manifestly a new departure. The most striking feature of this painting is its naturalism, or at least naturalist intention. This does not seem to be inherent in the nature of Safavid painting, still less a contribution of the North Indian tradition, foreign as it is to the whole aesthetic of the first period of post-classical art. Tentative essays in this direction may perhaps be found, though rarely, in the painting of the pre-Mughal Muslim courts of the sixteenth century and, as new evidence appears, their role may increase in importance, but it does not seem likely. At the moment the Mughal style occupies a position in Indian painting, all question of quality apart, not unlike that of fourteenth century Mongol painting in Persia. Both were styles evolved under newly arrived foreign dynasties; both had little or no relation with the earlier tradition of the country, yet their greatest practitioners were natives; and though they offered through naturalism an extension of range, both were rejected sooner or later by native taste. In that both styles are original it is meaningless to inquire into their real source. But in the conditions which made them possible the role of the patrons was crucial, and Akbar wished to impress on his contemporaries and posterity the image of the emperor and his magnificent court. Mughal painting then must be considered in a real sense a foreign development on Indian soil, as Muslim painting in India, to which Indian artists were recruited as more or less docile craftsmen. Except for the master exponents of the style, their training and habits of hand and eye could not be eradicated in one or two generations: in so far as they remain—they are specially clear in the subjects closest to him—they militate against the real intention of Mughal painting. It is this very antithesis of two contrasting aesthetics which gives Mughal painting, to some eyes, its peculiar and unresolved quality. Contemporary painting for the Muslim kingdoms of the Deccan, a truly Indian style using roughly the same Persian sources, makes here a revealing comparison. Even when in the early seventeenth century the Deccan artist adopted some of the natural forms of Mughal painting, he integrated them immediately with his own more formal style.

The history of seventeenth century painting outside the Mughal court but within the sphere of its political control presents an interesting situation. A style known as "Provincial" or "Popular" Mughal, neither title being descriptive of its nature, spread through the courts of Rajasthan. In this style, closest to that of the Akbar School and already out of date in Delhi, the Indian hand swiftly regains complete control, shedding all vestige of Mughal naturalism and retaining only those forms useful for its native expression. The artist, as it were, took back from the Mughal style what his previous generation could not help but put into it. In some states, Mewar for example, this style remained the directing source for the rest of the century. In others it was freely adapted and developed. In others again, like Bundelkhand, fighting for and gaining independence, the painting is so fresh and original that one has the feeling that the style is looking back beyond the Mughal episode to something now lost to us. This impression gains strength as new evidence comes to light. The Panjab Hill states took up the movement as it began to flag in Rajasthan, and for half a century produced one of the loveliest variations of the style. For this phase of Indian painting the Mughal style helped to provide a stimulus. For the next, the last, it was more directly responsible. In the first half of the eighteenth century, after the neglect of the reign of Aurangzeb, Mughal painting had itself been reclaimed by Indian taste, its naturalism used as the elements in a more formal, linear style. Utilized at the Mughal and provincial Muslim courts for portraiture, hunting and zenana scenes, it was transported during these troubled times to the comparative security of the Panjab Hills. Now close to the Indian conception of picture-making, it was immediately accessible to the Hill artist and swiftly supplanted the older style. A vehicle in its new environment for a tender and romantic statement of the Krishna legend, it sustained the Indian vision for a further two generations.

The division of Indian painting into wall painting and miniature painting is not entirely a formal one of scale and function. By accident of survival it corresponds roughly with the two great periods in Indian art. There are very few moments in a long history of almost two thousand years when both forms of painting have survived from the same artistic centre. No miniatures in museums and private collections are older than the tenth century, and though it would perhaps be unwise to say that no wall painting later than the twelfth century in North India or than the sixteenth century in South India is worth studying, little of what remains has in fact been studied. Consequently the classical period is represented almost exclusively by wall paintings, the post-classical by miniatures. If the lion's share of this book is devoted to the post-classical period, it is not merely because the miniatures of the classical period are lost to us and classical wall painting fragmentary. It is necessary to avoid two errors of interpretation: to see the history of post-classical painting as a postscript to classical art, a prolonged decline to the lively, decorative charm of a folk art practised at bucolic courts, and stimulated for two centuries to a slightly more ambitious production by the example of Mughal painting; or to elevate these little pictures to the status of classical wall painting, and of classical miniatures whose quality and authority are indicated by a handful of Orissan paintings from the very end of the period in that province. Classical and post-classical are two phases of an artistic tradition. So long as that tradition continued to renew itself, as it did until the beginning of the nineteenth century, it had something original to say which is referable only to the vision and mode of expression of each stage of its development. The value of the individual statement is a personal assessment: the eye of taste may rest where it will.

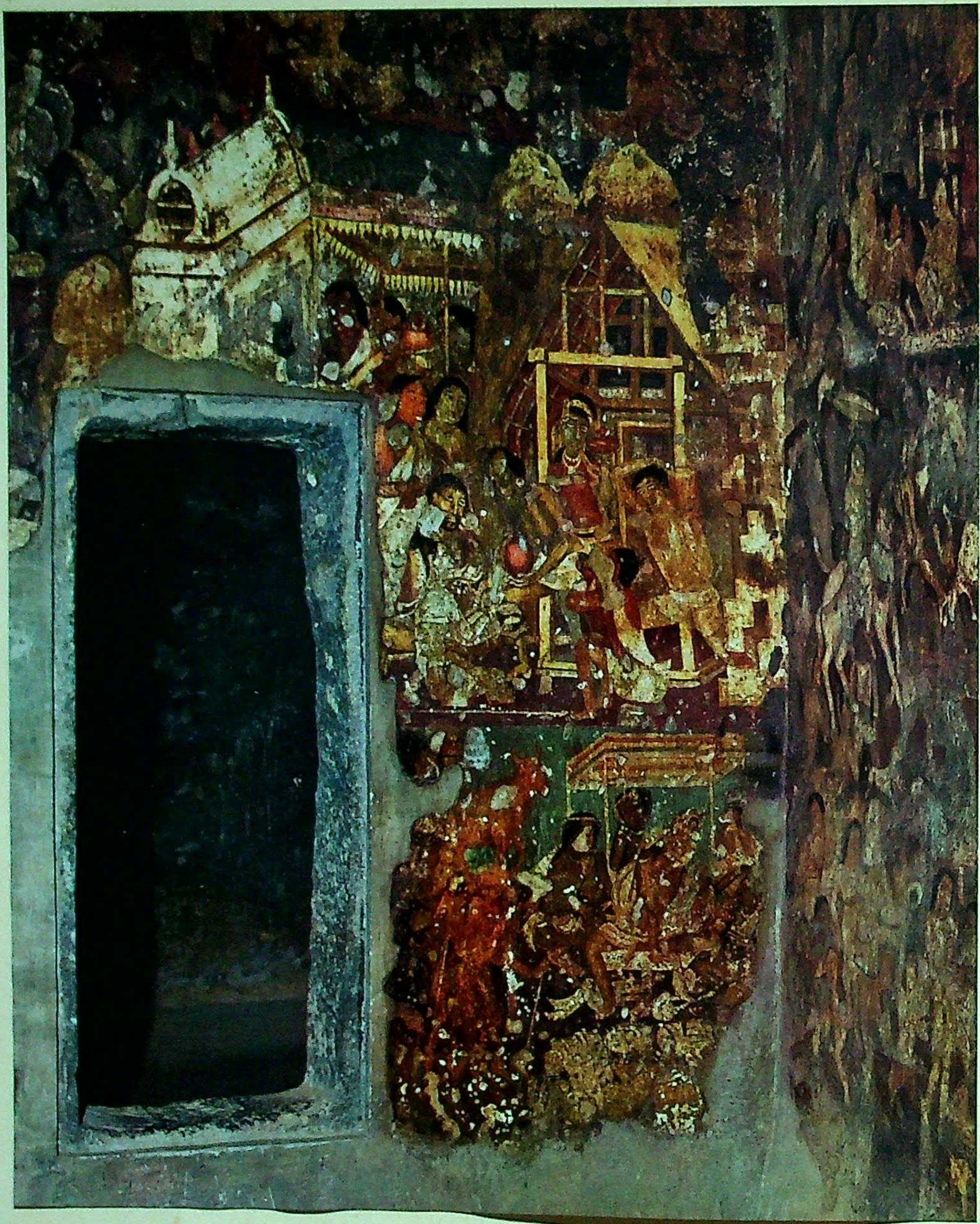
The concern of this book is style. Little attempt is made to sketch, even lightly, the subject matter of the pictures. The life of the Buddha or the story of Krishna are easily accessible. It may seem that the subjects chosen by the post-classical artist, the Krishna story, the pictorial illustrations of the modes of music, the seasons and so on, are all given an erotic bias. This is partially true, though the ardent and forthright verse is rarely mirrored in the paintings which generally treat sexual love demurely and allusively, except in a few superb Basohli miniatures. The Indian is an avid systematizer as will be apparent to anyone who has read the Kamasutra. But the elaborate classification of sexual moods and temperaments were themes only, excuses for picture-making as artificial and as vivid as the European mythology. They appealed, one supposes, to the owner of the zenana, whose interest in women must have required continuous stimulation, and even more to the women who were presumably required to study a variety of moods to secure the casual attention of their lords. One wonders, in fact, whether the best patrons of post-classical painting were the women of the court, who in an atmosphere of constant titillation were rarely satisfied and must have required some substitute gratification. The content of the picture has of course to be experienced: it cannot be explained and can so easily be explained away. It is important however to emphasize that the miniatures are not to be "read" by symbolism, sexual or any other, as some non-Indian critics have attempted. This rejection of the painting as painting usually involves comparisons —entwining trees lovers embracing—so banal that the mere statement, breaking the butterfly on a wheel, alienates the sympathy of the imagination, like the once popular program notes for concerts. Other more subjective discoveries are equally unhelpful, where they are not patently absurd. It has been said that the red backgrounds of the miniatures symbolize passion, as if the emotional connotation of a colour were not as diverse to an Indian as to a European. The value of this particular area of red in this particular picture, is the real question.

1

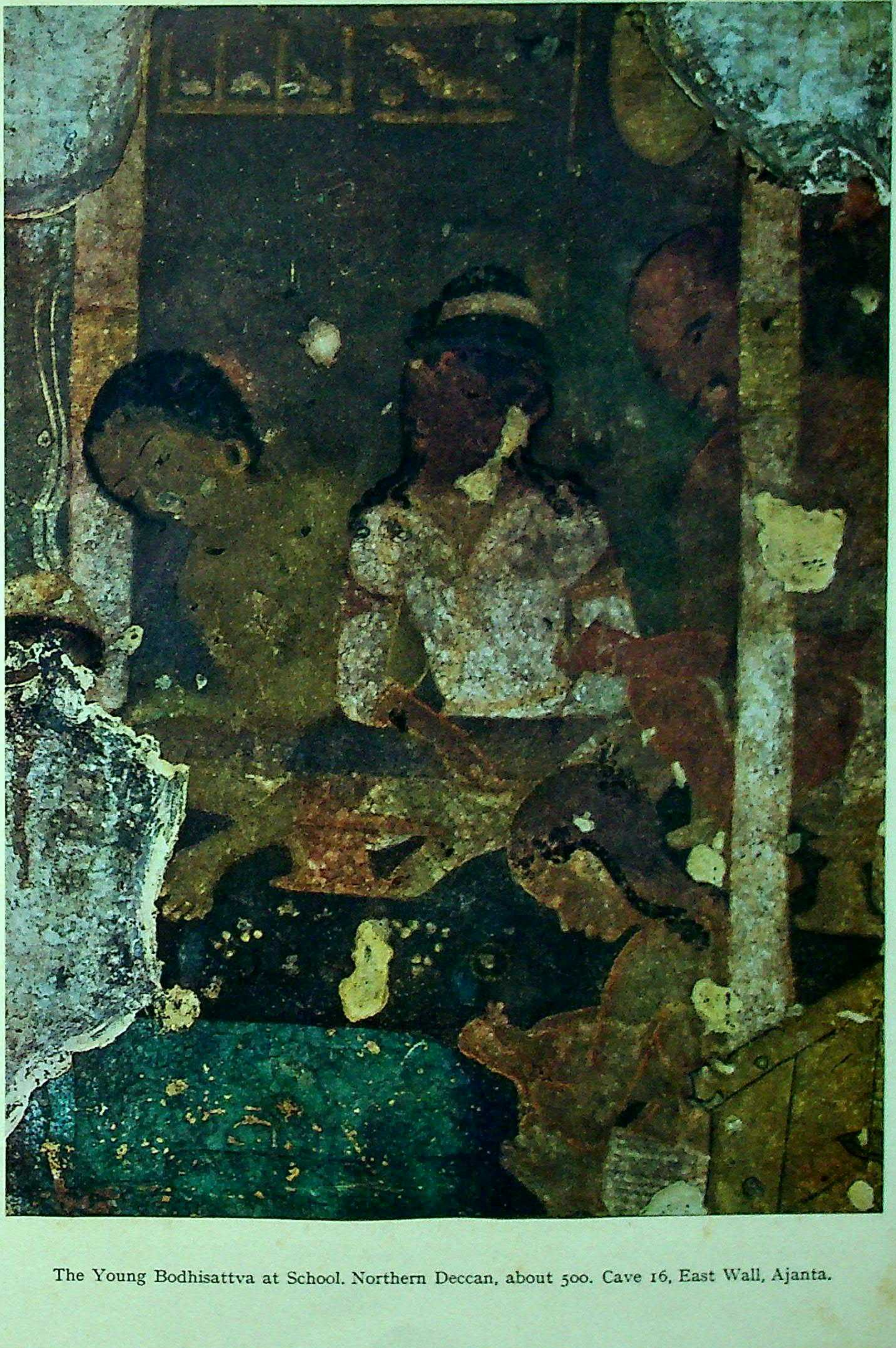
WALL PAINTING

SECOND TO SIXTEENTH CENTURY

It is sometimes said that India is a geographical concept only, her identity that of a vast triangle of land thrust out into the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean with its base securely protected except for the north-west passes by the mighty bulk of the Himalayas. Certainly she shares with Europe the failure to achieve any sort of political unity during her long history, and has spent most of her time and expended much of her energy in pointless internecine warfare. The idea of India as a political unit is no older than the last century. In a sense it has been abandoned already with the creation of India and West and East Pakistan; and with the redistribution of linguistic provinces in modern India there is fear expressed on all sides that the old separatism may prevail. India however, more particularly during the classical period of her culture, was a reality in the sense that mediaeval Europe was a reality. It was not so much the religion of Hinduism and its offshoots, Jainism and Buddhism, paramount though they were, but a common culture, a certain general view of man's nature and purpose, which created something immediately recognizable as Indian from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from Sind to Bengal. In this immense region there were many modes of expression, as distinctive as the contributions of the various nations of Europe to the culture of mediaeval Christianity. The geography of India which helped to preserve her identity was also responsible for the partial isolation in which each great province could pursue its own ideals. The history and art of India can be understood by a threefold division from west to east. North India, the vast fertile region watered by the Ganges and Indus Rivers with their tributaries, is protected to the north by the Himalayas and to the west by desert. In the north-west are the passes through which India's invaders and conquerors have arrived since the beginning of her history. To the south a strong barrier divides North India from the Deccan. Its centre is formed by the forested areas of the Vindhya and Maikal Hills, from whose peaks rise many of the springs of the Narmada and Tapti Rivers which flow westward to the Arabian Sea, and the Mahanadi River which empties into the Indian Ocean. At the western end of this barrier are ancient and easy ways across the rivers southwards to the high plateau of the Deccan, which is about two thousand feet high and rises towards Mysore. The western edge of the plateau is a steep brink, the Western Ghats, with a narrow strip of low country along the coast. The fall to the east however is much gentler



An Unidentified Jataka. Northern Deccan, about 500. Cave 17, East Wall, Ajanta.



The Young Bodhisattva at School. Northern Deccan, about 500. Cave 16, East Wall, Ajanta.

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and the coastal strip wider. The plateau is drained by the eastward flowing rivers Godavari, Bhima and Krishna. South of the Deccan and divided from it by the Tungabhadra and Krishna Rivers lies South India. The great rivers of South India all drain to the east, but south of the Krishna the Ghats keep close to the east coast, until just north of Madras they turn away westwards to converge with the Nilgiri Hills. The coastal plain from Madras to Cape Comorin and up the west coast to Calicut is the real South India. The Tungabhadra has been however the natural and historic frontier from the earliest times between the Deccan and South India. The three great political and artistic provinces, North India, the Deccan and South India, though frequently divided during the classical period between several kingdoms, retained nevertheless each its general identity of style and development. This is not to say that there was no artistic exchange between the provinces. In the first place each had a region peculiarly suitable for the transmission of artistic ideas and the reception of influences. In North India Malwa and southern Gujarat lie on the highroad to the Deccan and were often under the political control of the Deccan dynasties. At the eastern end of the barrier Bengal and Orissa were in close cultural contact, and in the art of the latter, essentially Deccan in feeling, the influence of North India is often clear. Again in the territory between the Tungabhadra and Mysore, the art of the small buffer states between the powerful dynasties of the Deccan and South India shows a real mingling of styles, the Deccan element being perhaps the stronger. The large-scale raids which were in general India's conception of warfare aided the movement of artists by capture or by the offer of more generous patronage, and, as in Europe, the styles of famous monasteries were circulated by pilgrims and portable works of art.

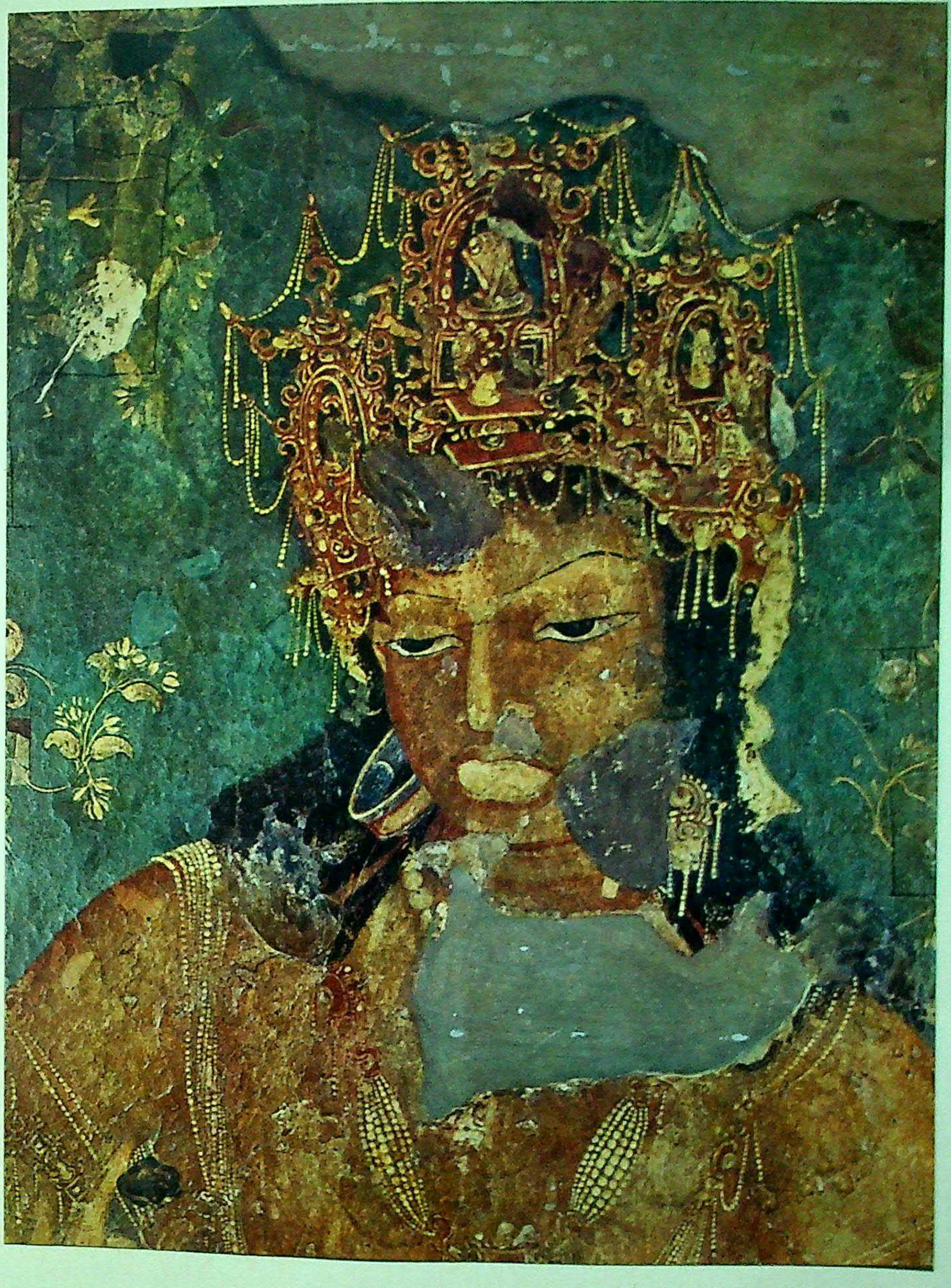
A consecutive history of Indian wall painting in the classical period cannot yet be written. India, more fortunate than the rest of Asia in the survival of her monuments, has, like mediaeval Europe, lost to the ravages of time and the climate all but a few groups of paintings to represent an achievement that was obviously comparable with her stone and bronze sculpture. The gaps in our knowledge are enormous. Even of the fragments which remain, the most important are often in lamentable condition or in such a position on the monument that prolonged study is difficult. Scarcely a mention will be found here of North India, though it will largely monopolize the other chapters of this book. In the Deccan a few splendid series make it possible to trace a development from the second to the tenth century. In South India the story is interrupted and broken, but something remains to illustrate two of the greatest periods and enough to see a movement of style. The function of wall painting on the Indian temple whether structural or cut in the living rock, was to act as adjunct to the sculpture and decorative carving. The large plain surfaces on walls and ceilings were reserved for the big formal schemes and figure subjects. The decorative carving, and probably also the figure sculpture, whose precision and delicacy delight us now, was almost certainly covered with painted stucco, the general effect being that of an eighteenth century Bavarian church. The paintings were however rarely designed to be seen in the brilliant Indian light, but were placed in the temple's inner halls or corridors, where by the muted light filtered through small doors and grills or by lamplight, the forms and colour could emerge slowly.

The earliest wall paintings in India are found in the rockcut Buddhist cave temples at Ajanta, which are situated at the head of one of the ghats that lead down from the Indhyadri Hills, dividing the tableland of the northern Deccan from Khandesh, into the valley of the Tapti River. From the middle of the first century B.C. to the early third century A.D. the north-west Deccan was ruled by the dynasty of the Satavahanas whose capital was at Paithan some eighty miles to the south of Ajanta. During the rule of this dynasty most of the finest early cave temples were excavated along the trade routes leading from the ports near Bombay to Paithan and other inland towns, and north-east to Malwa and North India. The groups at Karla, Nasik, Bhaja and Junnar are the best known, and most of them were patronized by the merchants, sometimes foreigners, who grew rich on the lucrative trade with the West. The Satavahana Empire covered roughly the modern state of Maharashtra, the only province of the Deccan in which Aryan penetration and assimilation was so complete as to introduce a northern language. It also seems at one time to have included Malwa where a craftsman of one of the Satavahanas recorded his name on the south gate of the Great Stupa at Sanchi. In the first half of the second century A.D. the Satavahanas seem to have lost the ports on the west coast to the invading Sakas of the Kardamaka family and to have turned their attention eastwards across the Deccan to the Andhradesa, the territory around the mouths of the Krishna and Godavari Rivers. Here they erected some of the greatest Buddhist monuments of early India, the finest of which was the Great Stupa at Amaravati, on the south bank of the Krishna River. In the early third century this widespread and powerful kingdom suddenly disintegrated and was replaced by several small dynasties.

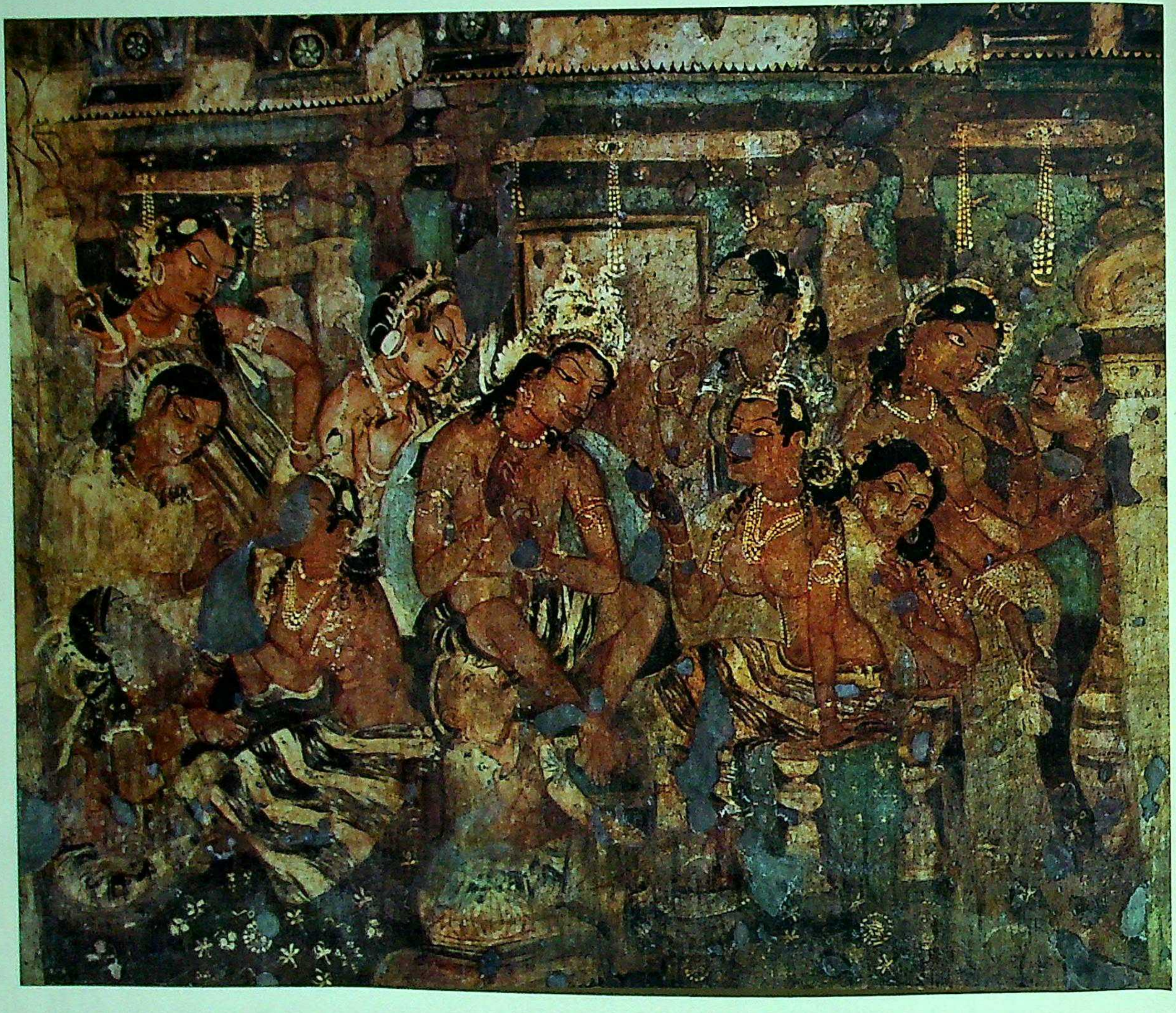
The Buddhist cave temples consisted of what are called "chaityas" and "viharas." The former bear some resemblance to an Early Christian basilica, having a long vaulted nave with two pillared aisles terminating in an apse. In the apse is placed the chaitya or stupa, also carved from the living rock, a solid structure of a dome raised on a circular drum and usually enshrining a relic either of the Buddha or of a Buddhist saint. The façade was in the form of a screen with small doors, surmounted by a huge horseshoe shaped window to light the interior. Though carved in the rock, the architectural forms and details closely follow those of wooden construction. The viharas were rectangular halls with a screen and verandah to the open air and cells for the monks on the inner three sides. The chaitya and vihara together formed a church and a monastery. In the former the stupa was the object of worship by monks and laity, in the latter the resident monks spent the year and the itinerant monks assembled for contemplation and instruction during the rains when pilgrimage and travel were not possible. Usually situated in the scarps which border the ghats, they were withdrawn and peaceful yet accessible to the laity whose contributions paid for their excavation and support.

By the beginning of the Christian era Buddhism had developed in a direction which its founder cannot have envisaged. The Buddha's doctrine, a flame which burned so clear and bright but gave no warmth, taught that each man must find his own lonely way to release by self-discipline and self-knowledge, bringing little comfort to the simple-hearted. No doubt even in his lifetime his followers had raised him almost to a divinity, and after his death, certainly by the time of the emperor Asoka, the symbols of the main events of his life were worshipped, the stupa representing his Parinirvana. The monasteries began to grow and become rich on the generous endowments of the faithful. The idea soon arose that man should not selfishly seek for individual release, but acting as Bodhisattva, as a living force of goodness, help to bring all sentient beings to salvation. This conception is expressed in so many of the dedicatory inscriptions of the period: "May this gift be for the welfare of mother and father and of all living creatures." By the end of the first century A.D. in North India and two or three generations later at Amaravati the image of the Buddha himself is introduced to satisfy the personal devotion and adoration *(bhakti)* of the simple monk and the laity, a need expressed by the other religions of contemporary India. The great philosopher, Nagarjuna, who probably lived in the first or second century A.D., seemed to believe that the bliss of release was here and now in man's daily life to the eyes and heart that could see and feel it. Soon the small forces of goodness of living creatures were paralleled by mighty sources of benevolence in the universe, conceived as the great Bodhisattvas, Avalokitesvara, Vajrapani and Manjusri, whom mankind must emulate and on whom it could call for aid and protection. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Indian artist is the embodiment in his images and paintings of the two attributes of power and compassion *(karuna)* which lie at the root of all his speculation on the nature of god and man.

The cave temples of Ajanta, some thirty in number, extend about six hundred metres from east to west along the face of an almost perpendicular cliff bordering a wild and semicircular glen, through which flows a stream, the Waghora. Above the caves the ravine terminates abruptly in a waterfall of seven leaps. In the centre of the group are two chaityas (Caves 9 and 10) with their associated viharas (Caves 8, 12 and 13). These caves are generally recognized as the earliest to be excavated at Ajanta, and some scholars have dated them as early as the second century B.C. Early paintings have survived on the left and end walls of Cave 9 and on the left and right walls of Cave 10. On the right wall of Cave 10 are painted the *Syama* and *Shaddanta Jatakas*, stories of the Buddha's previous existences on earth which were very popular with the laity. The stories are set out episodically in a long rectangular field rather like the carved *Jatakas* on the crossbars of the gateways to the Sanchi stupas or the railing frieze on the Great Stupa at Amaravati. The scenes, occasionally interrupted by a tree or building or group of rocks, flow smoothly, to be read by the worshipper as he moves clockwise round the temple performing his ritual circumambulation. The condition of these paintings has deteriorated so rapidly since their discovery that they are now usually illustrated in outline or coloured copies which give little feeling of the style. In the caves however they can still be seen as the pictorial equivalent of the sculptural style of the beginning of the Middle Phase at Amaravati of about 150 A.D. The colours employed are few, red and yellow ochre, terra verde, lamp black and white of lime, and are not used to model the figures. The line, though not yet inflected to give the illusion of volume, is beautifully even and flowing, like the preliminary sketch on stone of a sculptor of Nagarjunakonda in the Andhradesa of the third century A.D. The compositions have not achieved the complex recessions of the



Head of Bodhisattva. Northern Deccan, early seventh century. Cave 1, East Wall, Ajanta



Mahajanaka Jataka. Northern Deccan, seventh century. Cave 1, North Wall, Ajanta.

developed at a more or less even tempo throughout the artistic province. But in this vast region there was great and significant variation of actual style, and no evidence, as yet, that the Guptas were the source of the basic mode of expression, though the political unity which their empire imposed on North India for a century or more may have helped its swift and general dissemination. On the other hand, if by Gupta influence is meant northern influence in a general sense, it must be conceded that Ajanta lies on the northern edge of the Deccan plateau, less than two hundred miles from Ujjain, the capital of the Sakas in western Malwa. It is becoming increasingly clear that the "Gupta style" of this region and of Western India generally had its own individuality and quality, derived probably from the art of the Sakas of whose long period of rule there is as yet little material evidence. Even so the rather later paintings at Bagh in western Malwa, the only group of wall paintings of the classical period in North India, seem to represent a different tradition from those at Ajanta. Though there is a gap of three centuries between the Satavahana and Vakataka paintings it seems best to consider the latter as a continuation of the local northern Deccan style, which had completely assimilated such influence as may have been felt from Malwa by the fifth century.

Most of the paintings of Caves 1 and 2, except those already mentioned in the "Hariti Shrine" of Cave 2, belong to the final phase of creative activity at Ajanta. They are the best known and, it would seem, the most accessible to modern taste. In them the Ajanta style has moved from the dignity and calm of the Vakataka paintings into the ecstasy of the baroque. The figures, fully modelled with line and colour, express the excitement and languor of an experience half spiritual and half sensual. The famous large-scale Bodhisattva figures radiate a warm compassion and melting tenderness which, as in Bernini, is almost that of physical rapture. The quality is uneven, the mood sometimes forced. As in the European baroque only the masters could handle this style. In the failures the work is inflated and coarse: at his best the artist expresses his disturbing vision with a power and control only matched by contemporary sculpture. The great Trimurti figure at Elephanta makes the same overwhelming impact. Though work continued at Ajanta into the eighth century, the great paintings of the final phase seem to belong to the second half of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century. Thereafter the rich texture and plasticity of the style abruptly disappeared. Ajanta ceased to be a real centre of experiment, its decline due no doubt to the general weakening of Buddhist influence in the Deccan and Western India; and we have to go elsewhere in the Deccan for the further development of its painting.

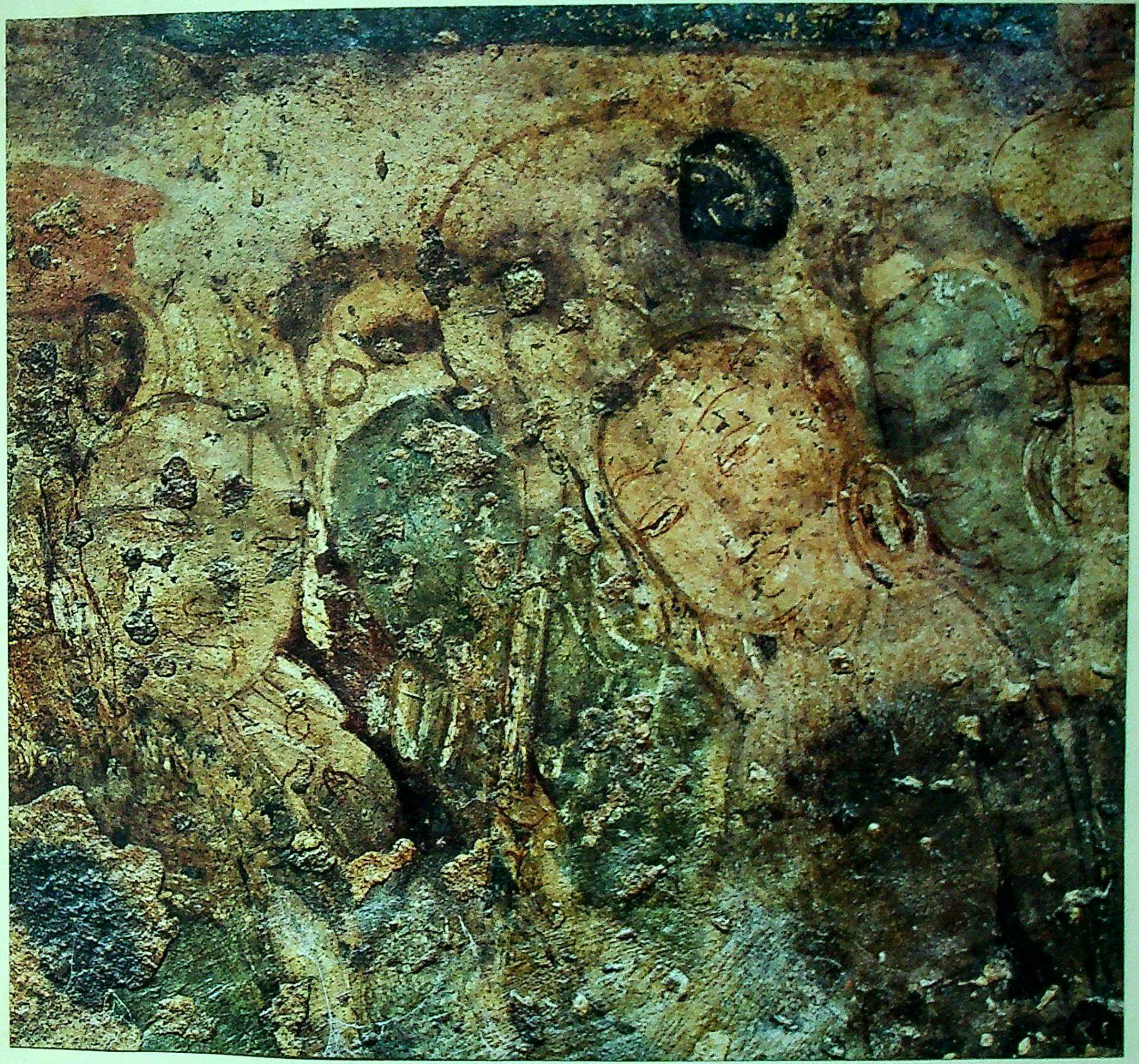
Illustrations pages 25, 29 and 30

A word may be said of the sole surviving group of wall paintings of the classical period from North India, those at Bagh in western Malwa. Unfortunately their condition is now such that they can only be understood on the site, the copies by which they are usually represented being of iconographic usefulness only. The paintings, also Buddhist, seem to belong to one period and to be contemporary with the last phase at Ajanta. They probably date from the second half of the sixth century or a little later. Their style and mood are however quite different from that at Ajanta. They are more tighly modelled, and are stronger in outline without the melting morbidezza of the Deccan paintings.

Nor is the experience they convey a religious one. The mystery and exultation of Ajanta are absent. No inner vision informs the beautiful Bagh figures: they are the dignified inhabitants of an Arcadia in whose pageantry Buddhism plays but a part. The Bagh painters used the tempera technique employed at Ajanta.

In the sixth century there arose in the southern Deccan a dynasty which was to unite the whole province for a period of two hundred years. The founder of the Early Western Chalukyas was Pulakesin I, who about 543 converted the hill of Badami into a fortress and capital. The lovely site, with its picturesque hills and lake, lies about three miles from the Malaprabha, a tributary of the Krishna River. The other main cities of the Early Chalukyas, now small villages, are not far distant: Mahakutesvara, among the hills to the east, Pattadakal, five miles down the river, and Aihole, a further eight miles downstream. All are full of the monuments of this great dynasty. Pulakesin's son Kirtivarman I, who ruled from 566 to 598, extended the frontiers of his kingdom to the north and south, and eastwards across the Deccan almost to Orissa. When he died his son, later to become Pulakesin II, the greatest of the line, was too young to succeed, and his uncle Mangalesa acted as regent. Mangalesa is important for the history of Early Western Chalukya art since he was responsible for the earliest dated monument of the dynasty. In 578, in the twelfth year of his brother's reign, he dedicated to the god Vishnu what is now called Cave 3, the finest cave temple at Badami. The sculptural decoration of this elaborate shrine, the huge panels representing the principal forms of Vishnu, the pairs of lovers acting as bracket figures on the pillars and the decorative carving, is well known. Mangalesa's inscription, together with other details regarding the cave and the correct conduct of worship, indicates that the surfaces of walls and ceilings were all painted. On the inner curve of the roof of the verandah and so protected from the weather, fragments still survive. There is no reason to doubt that they are contemporary with the construction of the cave and are the earliest Brahmanical wall painting in India. The interpretation of the subjects of these fragments varies. C. Sivaramamurti has lately suggested that one large panel represents the god Indra in his palace watching the dancing of his nymphs, while in the second are portraits of Kirtivarman and his queen. One thing is certain: we are here confronted with a tradition quite other than that of the Northern Deccan. The plastic intention of the softly modelled forms is clear, but the transitions from tone to tone up to the high lights are more subtly controlled, are, in fact, barely perceptible. This is perhaps partially due to the technique used at Badami, where the smooth lime plaster was placed on a rough mud base as at Ajanta, but the colours were applied in fresco secco. The softening of the contours and the more sensitive texture create that intimacy of atmosphere and delicate sentiment for which the Deccan and South Indian artist was always striving. Both are found in the carved bracket figures of the cave, though not of course in the big panels where the subjects demand the expression of majesty and quiescent power. It is unfortunately profitless to inquire the source of this beautiful style, as it is of Early Western Chalukya art generally. This region had formed part of the Satavahana empire, or at least of its sphere of influence, but nothing has survived to demonstrate how the southern Deccan used the Satavahana style. Nor is

Illustration page 33



Maidens. Southern Deccan, about 578. Cave 3, Badami.

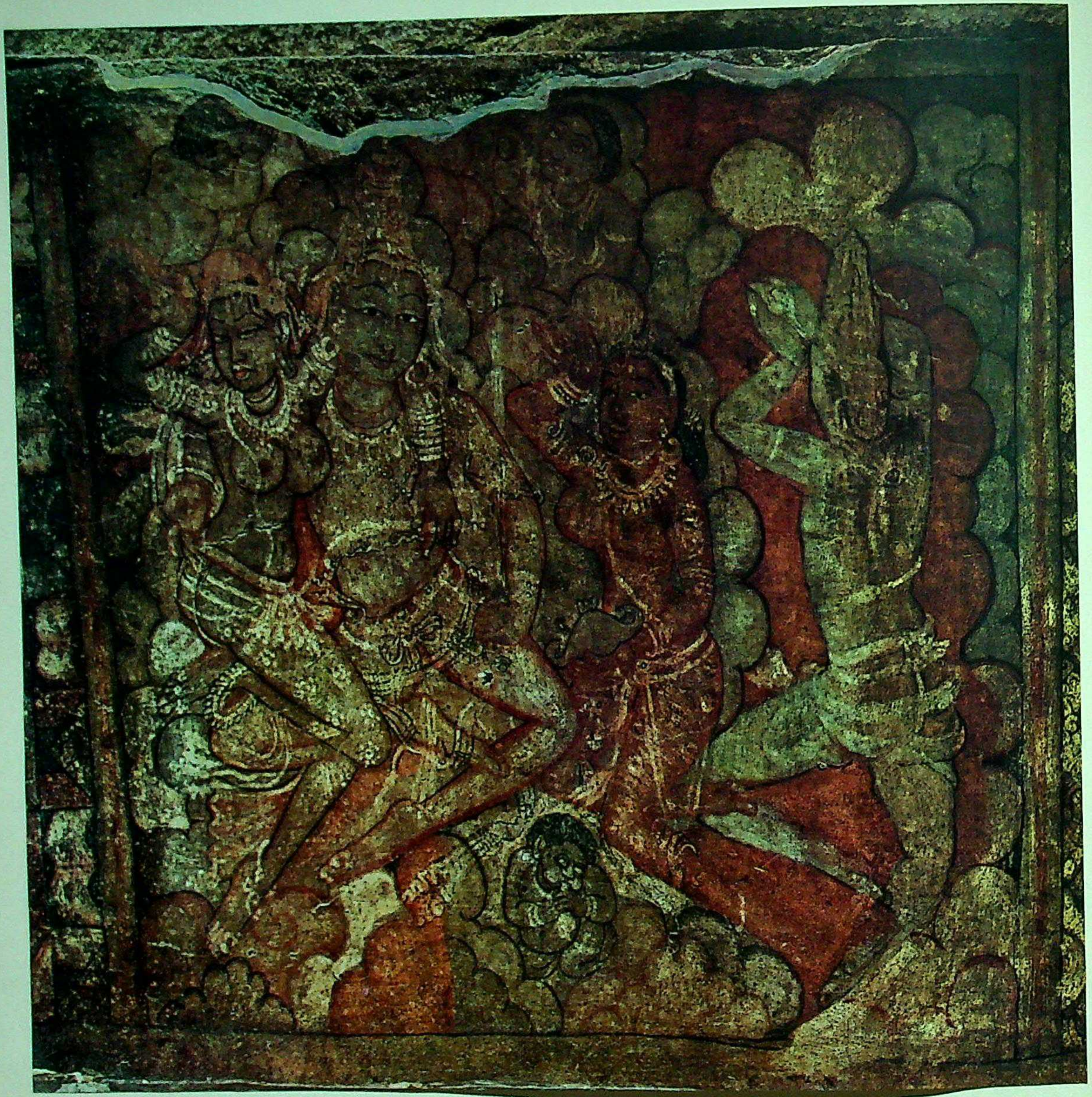
there any evidence to show what was happening in the three hundred years that intervene between the fall of the Satavahanas and the rise of the Early Western Chalukyas. This loss is the greater because by the beginning of the seventh century Badami and the nearby cities provided a spectacle unique in the history of Indian art. All three forms of Indian temple architecture were being used and developed alongside each other, not tentatively but in large-scale and elaborately planned monuments. The Chalukya role in the invention of these architectural styles, whose use in general was soon to be confined each to one of the three great artistic provinces, is a cardinal problem of Indian art. There can be no doubt however on present evidence that the monuments of the Early Western Chalukyas provide the earliest datable examples of each style.

In the reign of Pulakesin II, who came to the throne in 609, the dynasty was at its most powerful. The northern frontier was extended into southern Gujarat, and the Andhradesa was annexed and given to Pulakesin's younger brother who founded the Eastern Chalukya dynasty which continued to rule this region for some five hundred years. South of the Tungabhadra River began the exhausting struggle for control of the small buffer states with the Pallavas, the dominant power in South India, a pattern which continued under later dynasties up to the British occupation of India. Pulakesin twice invaded Pallava territory. About 642 the Pallavas retaliated. Pulakesin was probably killed and his capital sacked. The kingdom however survived this reverse, and in the prosperous and fairly peaceful period from about 680 to 750 many of the finest Chalukya temples were erected, including the Virupaksha Temple at Pattadakal. Unfortunately no wall painting survives from this period of great artistic activity. About 753 under circumstances which are still rather obscure the Early Western Chalukyas were replaced by the Rashtrakutas, a dynasty whose original centre seems to have been in the north-west Deccan. Krishna I succeeded about 756 and by his death about 772 the whole of the Deccan, except of course for the Andhradesa, was under Rashtrakuta control.

It was Krishna I who probably initiated the excavation of the Kailasanatha Temple at Elura, one of the greatest architectural monuments of classical India, if a temple carved from the living rock can be so called. The Elura cave temples are situated some sixty miles to the south of Ajanta and are excavated in a long, steep scarp overlooking the northern Deccan plateau. Of the three groups, that of twelve caves at the southern end of the scarp are Buddhist and probably cover the period from 550 to 650. Though originally painted, nothing worthy of note now survives. The Brahmanical caves are in the centre grouped alongside the Kailasanatha. Though two of them, the Ramesvara (Cave 21) and the Ravana-ka-Khai (Cave 14) contain some of the finest sculpture in the Deccan, it is the Kailasanatha itself which must claim our attention. The plan and style of the Kailasanatha closely follows the Virupaksha Temple at Pattadakal. The influence of the southern Deccan is also apparent in the earliest sculptural decoration of the monument. Many fragments of wall painting survive and will after cleaning be available for study. At the moment those on the ceiling and on the inner side of the architraves of the western porch are the most important. There are two, perhaps three, layers of painting on the ceiling, separated in date by some two centuries. The actual technique is that used at Badami. The earliest layer is probably contemporary with the main part of the monument and dates from about 750 to 800. The major fragment is painted with flying deities and dwarfs (Vidyadharas and Ganas) amid clouds, and a deity on a mythical monster (Sardula), making obeisance to a central deity now lost. In this fragment a movement away from the modelled, breathing forms of Ajanta and Badami towards a more linear mode of expression is already clear. The line continues to follow the contours of nature, but in order to express its own rather than nature's vitality. Such modelling as exists is not there to create the illusion of mass or volume, but as a device to lift the slender, lissom figures. Lightness, elegance, nervous energy are the qualities sought, and the contrast with the inert weight of the rock walls of the temple must have been superbly effective. So far as one can judge from the few fragments this style does not derive from the northern Deccan tradition as represented by Ajanta. It is possible that at the Early Western Chalukya centres of the southern Deccan the style of Badami had already developed in this direction, perhaps under the influence of the Pallava painting of South India. In sculpture certainly it is the work of the artists of the southern Deccan of the Rashtrakuta period and of the buffer states to the south of the Tungabhadra River which bears the closest resemblance in quality and intention to the earliest wall painting of the Kailasanatha Temple.

At the northern edge of the Elura scarp is a group of five Jain shrines, of which the most impressive is the so-called Indra Sabha (Cave 32). It was excavated about the middle of the ninth century and is, indeed, one of the most perfect examples of cave architecture of the whole site. It contains an extensive series of wall paintings, mostly ceiling panels of flying figures, tautly executed and showing the style of the earliest layer in the western porch of the Kailasanatha Temple at a slightly later stage. On the ceiling of the latter a fragment of Vishnu riding on Garuda, if, as is sometimes said, belonging to a second layer, must be close in date to the earliest fragments. There is however a clearly discernible upper layer painted with figures of deities of which Siva and Parvati on the bull Nandi and their son Karttikeya on his peacock are in the best condition. The Rashtrakutas, who from their strategically placed capital of Manyakheta (Malkhed) in the southern Deccan had waged almost continuous war on their neighbours in the Andhradesa and in South India, were overthrown soon after 973 by their feudatory, Taila II, who founded the dynasty known as the Late Western Chalukyas. The latter continued the foreign policy of their predecessors, and during the indecisive and exhausting campaigns of the eleventh century, their new capital Kalyani to the north of Manyakheta was sacked about 1045 by the great Chola King of South India, Rajadhiraja. The Chola carried off a famous trophy, now in the Tanjore Art Gallery, a magnificent stone image of a *dvarapalaka* or temple guardian. The style of this image is that of the deities on the upper layer of the Kailasanatha porch. Again both owe their suave, elegant contours and quiet, smiling power to the ideals of the southern Deccan. The second half of the twelfth century saw the loosening of Chalukya control over the province. Among the various resurgent feudatories the Yadavas seized the northern Deccan, their capital at Deogiri (Daulatabad) close to Elura, and continued to rule this

Illustration page 36



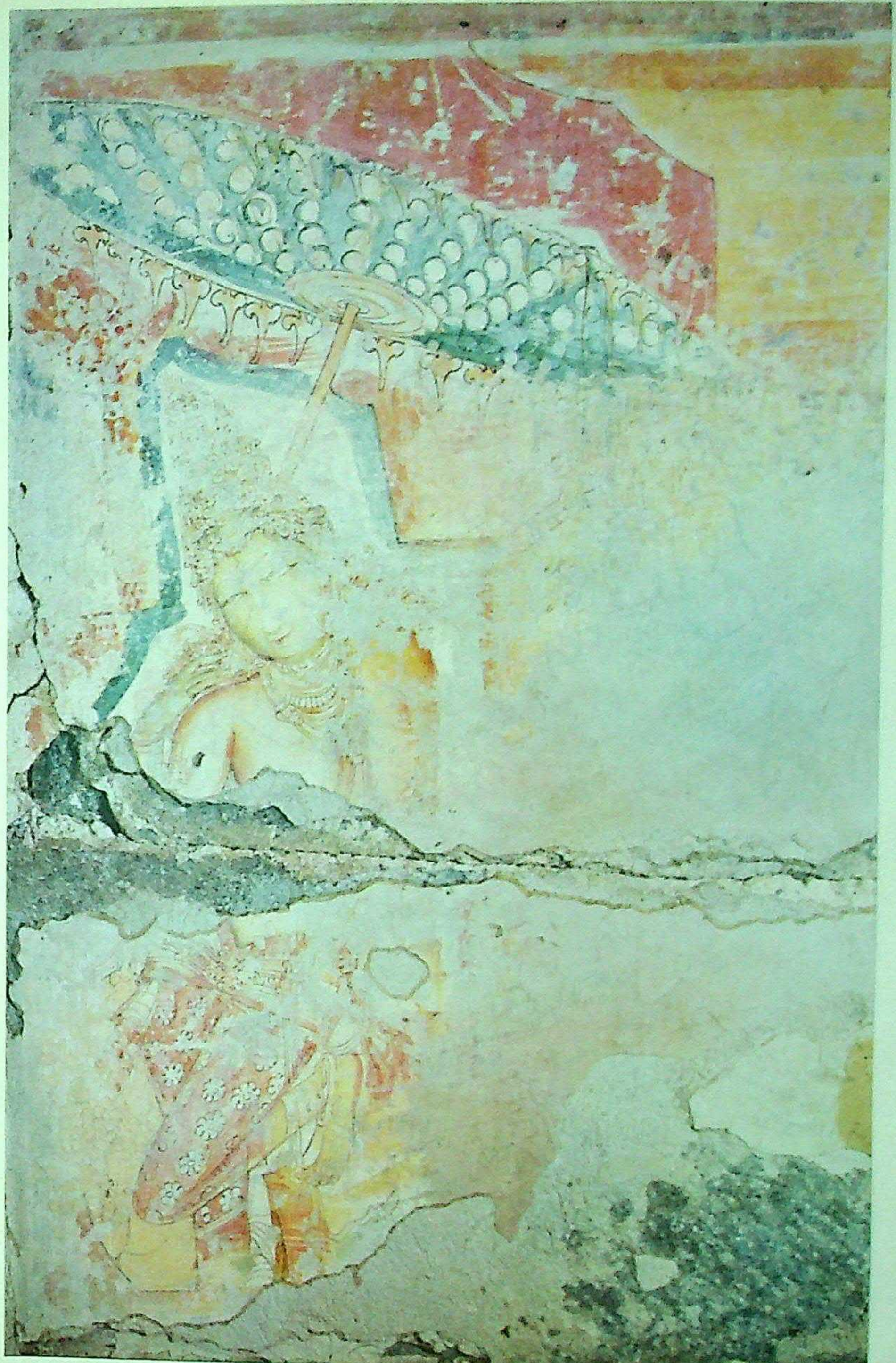
Flying Figures. Northern Deccan, about 850. Cave 32, Elura.

region until overwhelmed by the Muslim invasions in the early fourteenth century. On the inner side of the architraves of the western porch of the Kailasanatha is a series of battle scenes. Here the style has changed completely, and if we may judge from the architecture and sculpture of the Yadava period, the influence of Malwa and of southern Gujarat is strongly felt. These paintings have the liveliness and decorative charm of the thirteenth century marble friezes in the Jain temples of Western India. They have however little else, like the small group of very late classical wall paintings in the Vishnu temple at Madanpur (Bundelkhand) in North India. It is evident that the forms of the classical period were beginning to lose all meaning. These patterns of line and colour needed the vision of a new society to give them life and expression. This was the achievement of the post-classical period in North India and the Deccan.

The history of South Indian art does not begin until the late sixth century. Nothing indicative of style or quality remains of the brilliant civilization of the earlier period, of which such a vivid picture is presented in the Sangam, the earliest Tamil literature that has survived and which seems to cover the first four or five centuries of the Christian era. The culture of the three great kingdoms of the Sangam Age, the Cholas of Kaveripattinam, just north of the old Danish settlement of Tranquebar, the Pandyas of Madurai and the Cheras of Travancore, was supported by intensive agriculture on rich soil and by huge irrigation schemes. The country must have looked rather as it does now, every inch of the wide coastal strip covered with paddy fields and broken only by cocoanut, lime and mango groves and the closely set villages. The two cultures Tamil and Northern had already blended. Unfortunately this is apparent now only in the literature, where, in the words of Professor Nilakantha Sastri, "the most tangible result of the meeting of the Tamil and the Aryan is the tremendous richness and fecundity that was imparted to the Tamil idiom, and the rise of a literature which combined classic grace with vernacular energy and strength." In the literature there are already references to figures of gods and animals on wall paintings, painting being in any case as in the north an accomplishment of the properly trained hetaera. When at last in the seventh century rockcut temples begin to appear along the east coastal strip the Cholas, though only temporarily, have disappeared, their place taken by the Pallavas. The origin of the Pallava dynasty remains a mystery. Their monuments and inscriptions associate them with Tondaimandalam, the coastal region between the North Penner and North Vellar Rivers, their capital at Kanchipuram (Conjeevaram). They did not at first patronize Tamil literature and their administrative system seems to have had more in common with that of the Satavahanas. Though perhaps Tondaimandalam was their original home their close cultural ties with the south-east Deccan are clear. Their early history is difficult and confused but a Pallava succession of kings did rule from about 250 to 600. It was however Simhavishnu, who lived in the last quarter of the sixth century, who founded the first of the great South Indian empires, establishing his rule from the north of Madras to Tanjore District. Until the latter part of the ninth century the Pallavas covered this region with rockcut and structural temples, some of the finest examples of which can be seen at their capital Kanchipuram and at Mamallapuram, their port south of Madras. Though original, their style of architecture seems to be a parallel development to the so-called "southern" style of the Early Western Chalukyas, and was evolved no doubt from the same now lost source. There is however less desire to overwhelm. The exuberance and bravura of North India and the northern Deccan was foreign to their vision. Everything is pitched in a low key, the emphasis on restraint and reticence. The sculpture, as soon as it appears, has the peculiarly southern qualities of grace and refinement. The superlative craftsmanship was unobtrusive, the slender, taut figures fully realized by the shallowest cutting of the hard stones in which the Pallava sculptor often worked.

Unfortunately little is known of painting under the Pallavas. A few small fragments in the Kailasanatha and Vaikunthaperumal temples at Kanchipuram of the eighth century, and in the cave temples at Mamandur and elsewhere merely serve to underline what has been lost. Two more substantial groups however afford some indication of what the Pallava artist was capable. The earlier group is on the walls of the side shrines of the Talagirisvara Temple at Panamalai, which was built by Narasimhavarman II who ruled from about 695 to 722. This gifted man, who even sent an embassy to China in 720 and assumed among other titles that of Rajasimha or Lion among Kings, was enabled by a peaceful reign to indulge his passion for building at Mamallapuram and the capital, where he constructed the greatest of Pallava temples, the Kailasanatha. The best preserved fragment at Panamalai is of a female figure, a perfect idealization of the willowy fine-boned women of the South comparable to one of the masterpieces of Pallava sculpture, the goddess Parvati inside the antechamber to the Kailasanatha at Kanchipuram. The soft, liquid gradations of tone, which give the painting its delicate beauty, were made possible by the excellent technique employed by the southern artists. South of the Tungabhadra River, as in the Deccan apart from Ajanta, the technique of wall painting was fresco secco, but, the analyses by Dr S. Paramasivan have shown, in the South the smooth coating of lime plaster was strongly bound to a lime and sand base and took a fine gloss to which the pigments adhered tightly. Evidence from the Sangam literature suggests that this technique was known early in the Christian era. Though invariably followed in South India it seems, strangely, to be unknown in Ceylon. The second group of wall paintings of the Pallava period lie south of the Kaveri River in the old state of Pudukkottai. About ten miles northwest of Pudukkottai Town is the small village of Sittanavasal. In the side of a nearby hill has been excavated a cave temple dedicated to the Jain religion and consisting of a shrine and covered verandah. The shrine in its present form may date from the seventh century, though it is probably later. To the south of the cave is a Tamil inscription which states that a Jain *acharya* (teacher) from Madurai renovated the *ardhamandapam* (verandah) and built a *mukhamandapam* (hall) in front of the cave in the reign of Srivallabha. It was under Srimara Srivallabha, who ruled from about 815 to 862, that the Pandyas of Madurai extended their rule into Travancore and up to Tanjore, thus depriving the Pallavas of much of their territory. The "renovation" of the cave may have included the painting or repainting of the shrine and verandah. Though long accepted as representative of the seventh century the figural style of the paintings which have survived, when compared with that of the sculptures of this region, on the

Illustration page 39



Female Figure. South India, early eighth century. Talagirisvara Temple, Panamalai.

Valisvara temple at Tiruvalisvaram, for example, precludes a date earlier than about 850. On the pillars of the verandah are two figures of nymphs *(apsaras)* dancing amid clouds and a group of a "King and his queen" facing a male figure. The latter has been interpreted as the Jain donor before Srivallabha. The dancing figures, though sadly damaged, retain much of their original grace and allure. The contours are firmly drawn in dark red on a lighter red ground, the body painted yellow with slight but sensitive modelling. Here again the quality of the line and modelling is completely lost in the copies which are often used to illustrate the paintings of the cave. On the ceiling of the verandah is painted a large decorative scheme of great beauty, a lotus pool with fish, birds, elephants,

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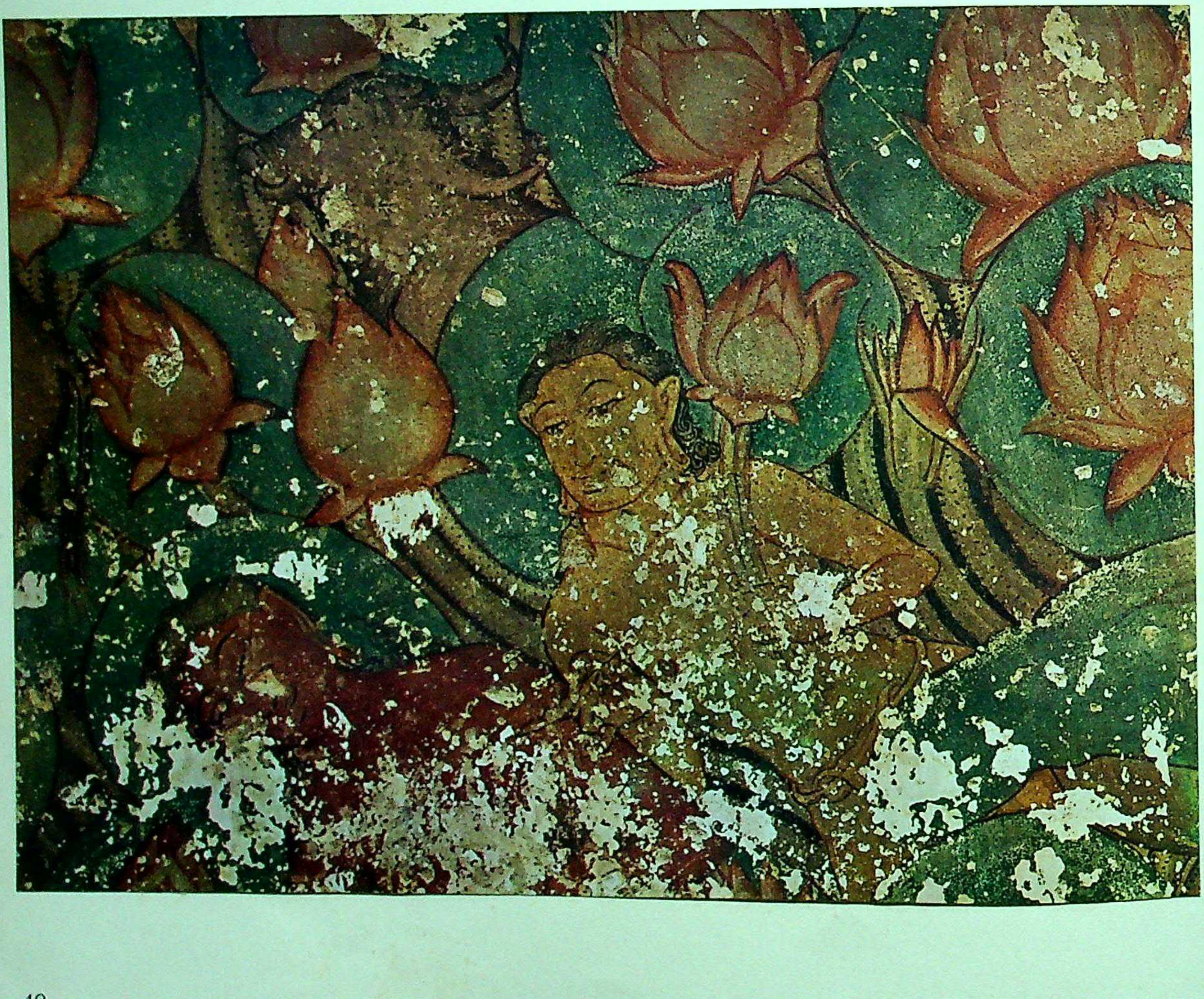
Figure in Lotus Pool. South India, about 850. Jain Cave, Sittanavasal.



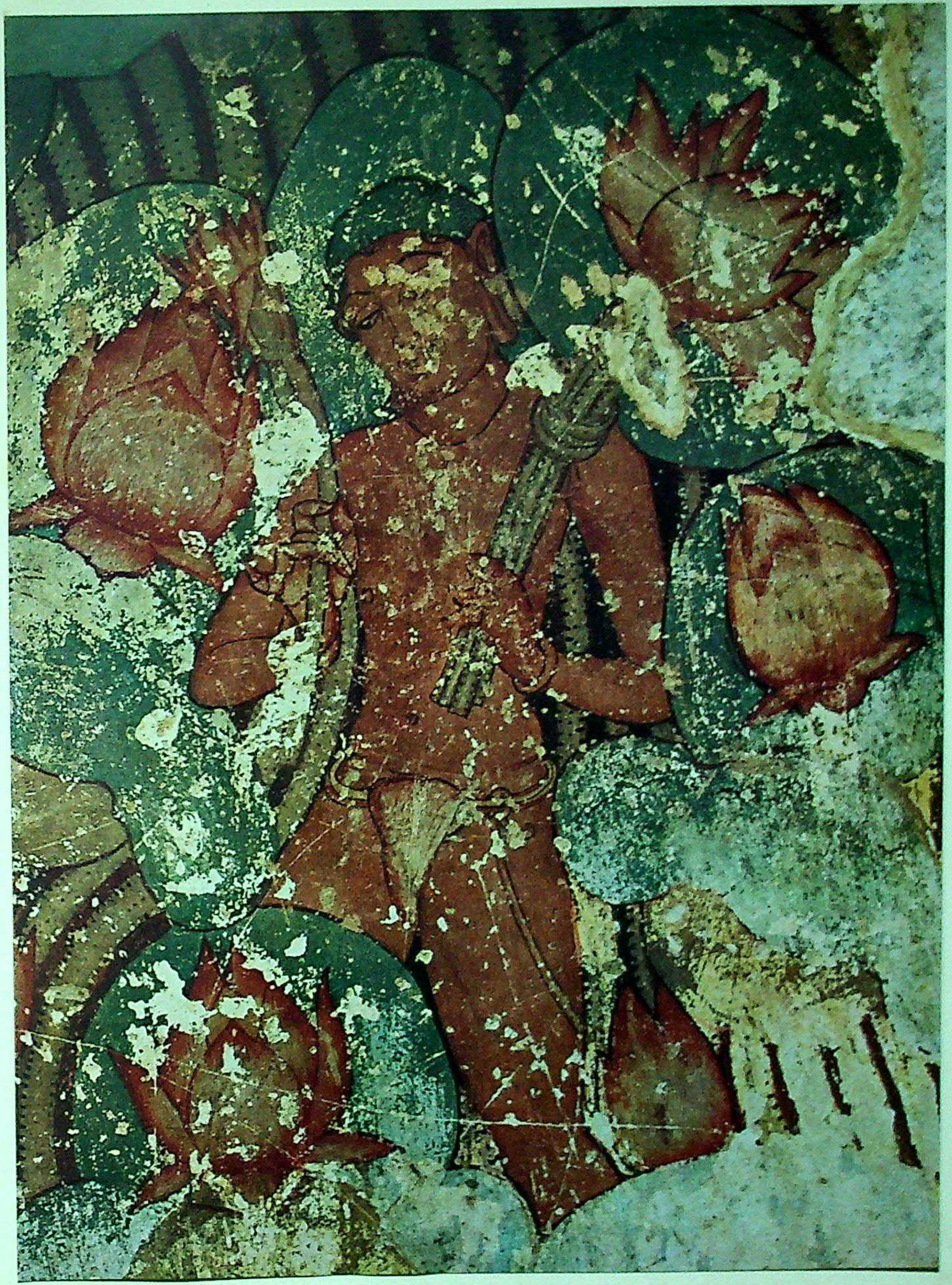
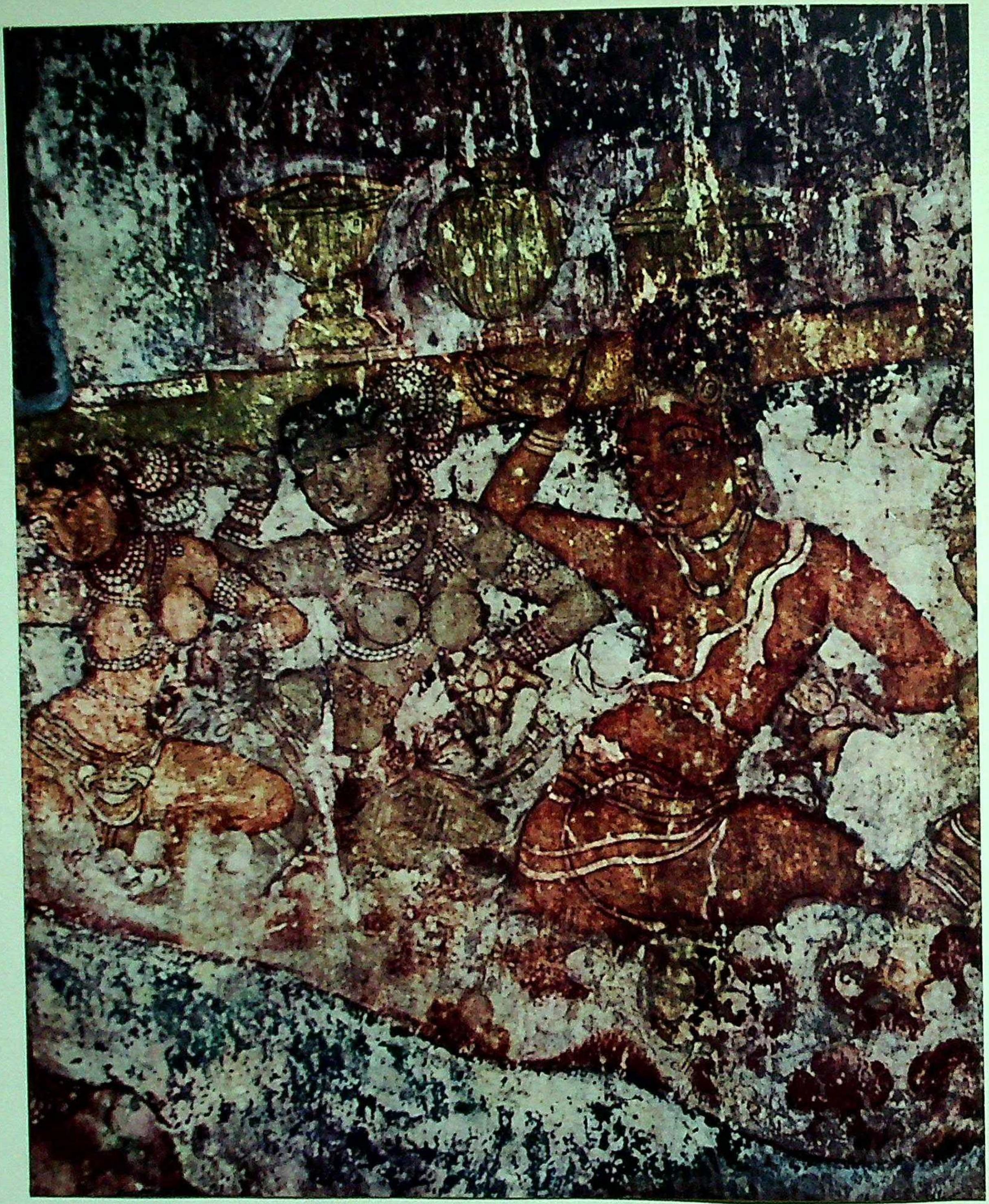


Figure in Lotus Pool. South India, about 850. Jain Cave, Sittanavasal.



Dancing Figures. South India, early eleventh century. Rajarajesvara Temple, Tanjore.

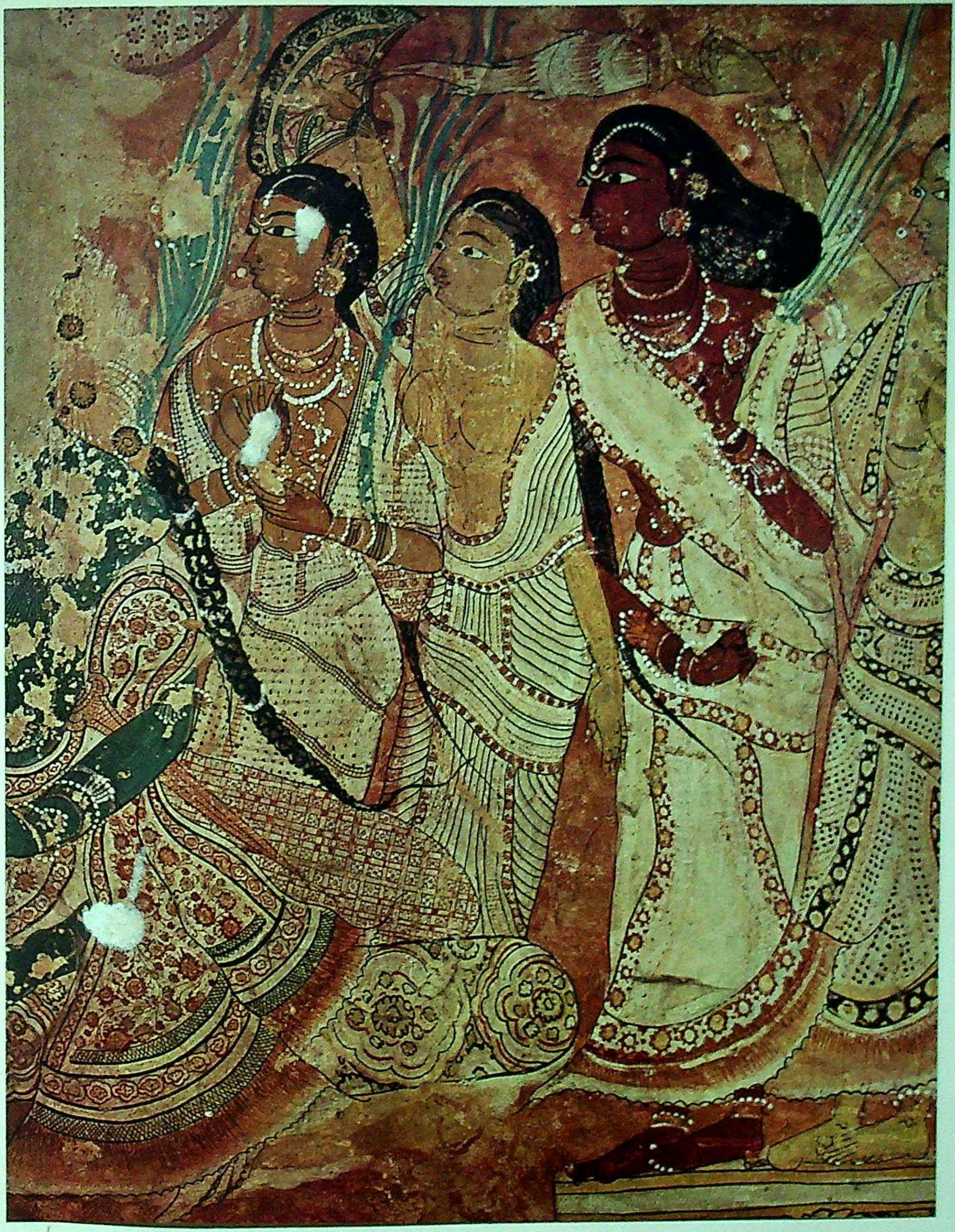
buffaloes and three young men plucking the flowers. The iconography of this poetic and intimate picture of a village tank and its denizens has been tediously debated. The decoration of the ceiling of the shrine consists of two panels each extending across its entire width. The panel near the verandah continues the lotus pool scheme, the inner panel being taken up by a geometric pattern of little interest, which may be as late as the thirteenth century. Both are said to be painted over an earlier layer of indeterminate design. The Sittanavasal wall paintings, like the roughly contemporary small fragments at Tirumayam and Tirumalaipuram, are not strictly speaking Pallava. They may however be taken to represent the general southern style of the late ninth century, the establishment of a specifically Pandya variant of it being out of the question on the small amount of material available.

In the second half of the ninth century the power of the Pallavas declined rapidly and their place was taken by the Cholas who more or less dominated India south of the Tungabhadra until the early thirteenth century. The dynasty was founded by Vijayalaya who captured Tanjore some time before 850. His successor Aditya I, who came to the throne about 871, supported the Pallavas against the Pandyas in the disastrous defeat of the latter at Sripurambiyam in 880. He then turned on his overlords, invaded Tondaimandalam and defeated and killed Aparajita, the last of the Pallava Kings. By the end of the century the Chola empire bordered that of the Rashtrakutas. Aditya was succeeded by his son Parantaka I in 907. Parantaka completed the conquest of the Pandya country and was at first successful against the invading Rashtrakutas. In 949 however at the battle of Takkolam the Chola army was decisively defeated, and when Parantaka died in 955 the Rashtrakutas were in control of Tondaimandalam and the Chola empire had shrunk to its original frontiers. In this period of two generations took place one of the most remarkable outbursts of creative energy in the history of Indian art. Aditya I's claim to have built stone temples to Siva along both banks of the Kaveri from the mountains to the sea is literally true; a large number still adorn the lovely riparian villages of the Tanjore and Trichinopoly Districts. These small perfectly proportioned shrines, based on strong, simple mouldings and with beautifully articulated walls, act as frames to a style of sculpture which repeats with a subtle difference clear to see but hard to define the finest work of the Pallavas. The total disappearance of the painting of this period is one of our greatest losses. Parantaka's death was followed by thirty confused years, which, though important in the sphere of art, have left no painting. Although most of Tondaimandalam was recovered from the Rashtrakutas it was not until 985 with the accession of Rajaraja I that the Cholas became again the paramount power in South India. The splendid age of Rajaraja, his conquests in the Pandya and Chera countries and in Ceylon, his successful campaigns against the Late Western Chalukyas, the whole imperial glory of his reign, culminates in the huge Siva temple, the Rajarajesvara, at Tanjore, completed about 1010. This lavishly endowed temple, though it has lost its gold plate and most of its splendid bronze images, remains the finest and most complete expression of the classical Indian genius. The base of the great two hundred feet high tower *(vimana)* encloses the central shrine, which is surrounded by a nine feet wide circumambulatory passage, lit by three open niches in the centre of the external walls. Pilasters corresponding to the articulation of the outer walls divide the passage into fifteen chambers. The three which face the openings in the outer wall contain large sculptural representations of the appropriate deities, the others are covered with wall paintings. In six of the chambers the paintings belong to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On the walls of the remaining six the late paintings have broken away in places to reveal an earlier layer undoubtedly an original part of the decoration of the Rajarajesvara. The work of stripping and cleaning the Chola layer has been in progress for some time, and few of the paintings are known. When they are fully published they will be seen to be the most important series surviving from South India. The subjects deal with the Saivite religion, but whether they belong to a single decorative scheme it is impossible yet to say. Some of the finest panels illustrate the life of Sundaramurti, one of the sixty-three poet saints or *nayanars* who led the intensely emotional Saivite revival in South India of the seventh to ninth century. Siva himself is frequently represented as Nataraja or Lord of the Dance, Rajaraja's favourite form of the deity, or as Tripurantaka, the latter a large-scale battle scene. The technique of the Tanjore wall paintings is found nowhere else in India, not even in the South. The mineral colours, a fairly extensive palette, were applied as true fresco on the damp plaster. The joints in the work are not visible and there seem to be few signs of retouching in fresco secco. The contours are drawn in light red occasionally reinforced with black. The line is tense and controlled, doing its work without flourish or display. The movement of the colour modelling is kept slow and smooth, the general attitude to form that of the contemporary artist in bronze. A second circumambulatory passage above the one already described is also said to contain fragments of painting of eleventh century date.

Illustration page 42

The Chola empire retained its integrity under a series of able rulers until the early thirteenth century. The vital development of temple architecture in planning and design into the twelfth century, is illustrated by the well-known shrines at Darasuram, constructed in the reign of Rajaraja II (1146-1173) and Tribhuvanam, which belongs to the reign of Kulottunga III (about 1178-1218), the last of the great Chola Kings. Figure sculpture, both in stone and bronze, remained at a high level, though the great style of the Early Cholas did not long survive the reign of Rajaraja I. From this period few fragments of painting remain. In the Vijayalayacolesvara temple at Narttamalai in old Pudukkottai State, a justly famous Early Chola shrine of the ninth century, a few lively and attractive sketches of female figures still survive on the south wall, dating probably from the early twelfth century. A lovely fragmentary figure of a girl with delicately touched in high lights on her folded hands may be earlier. On the north wall are two large paintings of Siva as Bhairava and Nataraja. They are carefully drawn, but dull and flat, and are not earlier than the late fifteenth century.

The decline of the Cholas and a temporary revival of the Pandyas were followed in the early fourteenth century by Muslim raids deep into South India, where Ma'bar, the Pandya country, was actually held by Muslim rulers for a period. The Deccan was permanently lost, but the Hindu culture of South India was saved by the brothers



Group of Women. South India, about 1540. Lepakshi Temple, near Hindupur.

Harihara and Bukka who in 1336 founded on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra River, the ancient frontier, the city of Vijayanagar, the "City of Victory." By the end of the century the new dynasty had established its rule throughout South India. It was not a moment too soon. In 1347 an independent sultanate of the Deccan was established by the Bahmani dynasty, with the capital first at Gulbarga, later at Bidar. In spite of the almost continuous state of war for the next two centuries, the frontier was firmly held and South India was able to develop the last phase of her art and culture in security. The significant achievement of this period is in architecture. The increasing size and elaboration of design, the multiplication of halls, cloisters and gate-towers *(gopuras)* were wholly successful, as can be seen in most of the temple cities of South India and above all in the clear, bold planning of the capital itself, which claimed the admiration of contemporary European visitors and whose ruins remain one of the finest spectacles in Asia. Large-scale figure sculpture merely served a decorative and iconographic function on the temple walls, the earlier authority and completeness of the single image no longer respected or attainable. The Vijayanagar craftsman was however an excellent miniaturist both in stone and bronze, and his flat decorative friezes of dancers and animals display a quite original formal grace. Of early Vijayanagar painting there is a little evidence in the Jain Vardhamana Temple at Tiruparuttikunram on the outskirts of Kanchipuram. On the ceiling of a hall (Sangita-mandapam) erected in 1387 are long friezes of indifferent eighteenth century paintings with a few small fragments of the original decoration exposed here and there. In recent books the late painting, of iconographical interest only, seems unaccountably to be confused with the early. It is clear from the few late fourteenth century fragments that though the South Indian artist was still attempting the fully realized natural forms of earlier painting by the inflexion of line, modelling in colour had virtually disappeared. When next we see Vijayanagar painting after an interval of almost two hundred years the use of colour to bring out the volumes of a picture and produce a three-dimensional effect has been completely abandoned. In the reign of Achyutadeva Raya (1530-1542) a large and impressive temple was built at Lepakshi, now a small village in Anantapur District, by two brothers from the nearby fortress of Penugonda. The temple contains an extensive series of wall paintings in the main hall and vestibule to the shrine, most of which, if not all, are of the date of the construction or soon after. The paintings are dispersed in broad friezes, rather like the earliest work at Ajanta, and illustrate Saivite themes. In them the naturalism of classical South Indian painting says its last word. The colour and disposition of draperies and ornaments are used for a purely formal purpose and though the line cannot resist the urge to follow the swelling contours of the figures, thereby giving them scale and dignity, it is not allowed to disturb the rich two-dimensional texture of the painted surface. The artist, like the contemporary sculptor, was still unable to keep his eye wholly turned away from nature, and the forms of animals and birds are sketched in with quick and tender strokes. A fragment of the same late Vijayanagar style of painting is found also in the Vishnu Temple, said to have been constructed in 1578, at Somapalayam in Cuddapah District, some sixty miles south-east of Lepakshi. In 1565 the armies of the Vijayanagar empire

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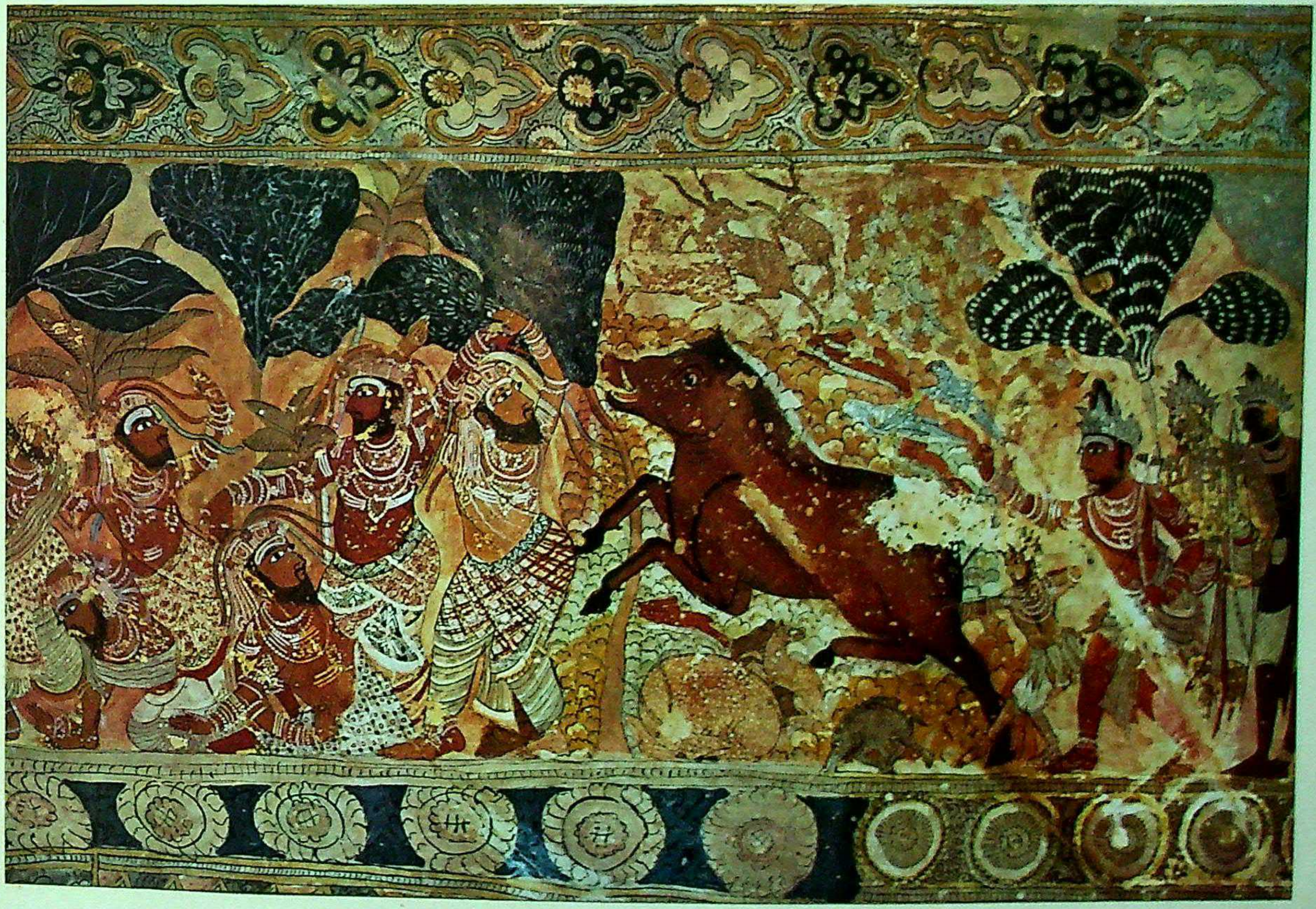
were decisively defeated by a Muslim confederacy of Deccan states at the battle of Talikota. Though the capital was sacked and not reoccupied the empire survived for almost a century. The late Vijayanagar style also continued into the seventeenth century, as can be seen from the wall paintings in the Uchayappa Math at Anegundi, on the north bank of the Tungabhadra River opposite Vijayanagar. More important perhaps was the part played by the Vijayanagar artist in the creation of a truly Indian style at the Muslim courts of the Southern Deccan in the sixteenth century. In South India its slow decline was prolonged into the nineteenth century. Only in the palaces and temples of Cochin and Travancore did an ornate version of the style continue to be employed with a sumptuously decorative effect.

The Boar Hunt. South India, about 1540. Lepakshi Temple, near Hindupur.



2

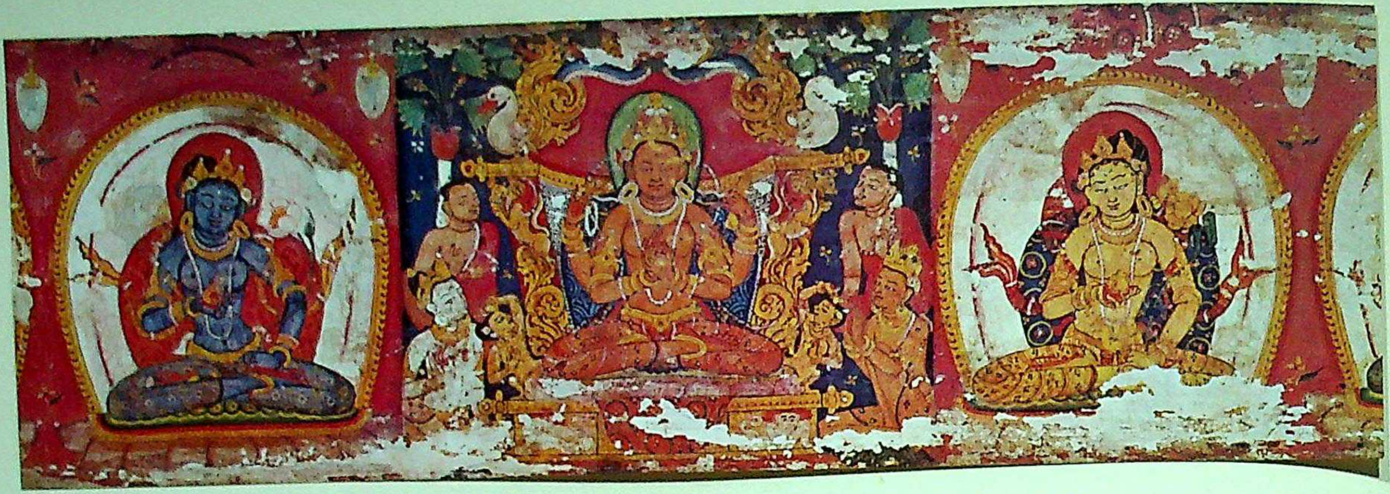
MINIATURE PAINTING

THE PRE-MUGHAL PERIOD

ELEVENTH TO SIXTEENTH CENTURY

It is probable that the illustration and illumination of manuscripts, both religious and secular, was widely practised throughout India in the classical period of her culture. A fair number of such manuscripts has in fact survived, but all are from Northern India and represent the last phase of that artistic province on the eve of the Muslim conquests. They are nevertheless of the greatest importance in the history of Indian painting, and not merely on account of their intrinsic quality. One school, that of Western India, continued to direct the course of painting in Northern India for more than two centuries of Muslim rule. The influence of the two others, of Bihar and Bengal and of Kashmir, is paramount even today in the painting of Nepal and Tibet.

We have seen in the last chapter that the completest visual expression of Buddhism in the *bhakti* stage of its development was in the Ajanta wall paintings of the fifth and sixth centuries. There the sombre metaphysics of early Buddhism had found no place. The Buddha, and the great Bodhisattvas, were presented as ideal human beings and as saviours, to be emulated and to be worshipped. The life of man and nature was not rejected as illusory merely: rather did its transitoriness—the flower and the falling leaf were favourite images of the Buddhist writers—render its experience the more sweet and poignant. The sculptural counterparts of these gracious and compassionate beings are to be found in the shrines of the caves, and also in the work of the contemporary School of Sarnath, in Bihar. Sarnath, in whose deer park the Buddha first turned the Wheel of the Law, was a famous place of pilgrimage and close to the eastern capitals of the Gupta Empire. The image which its sculptors created of the Buddha and of the Bodhisattvas is closely comparable to that of the Deccan, with more sweetness perhaps and less power. It survived the fall of the empire and is found at a later stage of its development in the eighth century when Bihar and the neighbouring province of Bengal were brought under the control of the Pala dynasty which ruled this region from about 750 to the middle of the twelfth century. The Pala period witnessed the final flowering in India of Buddhism and of Buddhist art. The great monasteries *(mahaviharas)* of Nalanda, Odantapuri, Vikramasila and Somarupa were famous throughout the Buddhist world and their influence was enormous. Endowed by king and subject alike, they not only served as universities and theological colleges but contained scriptoria for the copying



The Bodhisattva Prajnaparamita. Back Cover of a Palm-leaf Manuscript of the Astasahasrika-Prajnaparamita. Pala School, last quarter of eleventh century. (2⅝ × 7⅞″) MS. Sansk. a.7 (R), Bodleian Library, Oxford.

and illustration of manuscripts, and workshops for the casting of bronze images. From all over south-east Asia students and pilgrims assembled for discussion and instruction and on their return took back to their native countries portable examples of Pala Buddhist art, bronzes and manuscripts. Missionaries from the monasteries must also have helped to carry the Pala style to Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Ceylon and Java.

Buddhist thought had meanwhile developed in a direction difficult for the modern mind to follow with sympathy. It was now believed that by means of certain verbal formulae or *mantras* the detached and emptied mind could summon up a vast number of imagined deities, identify itself with them, and draw from them the spiritual powers they symbolized or embodied: and so progress towards Enlightenment. The magical power to compel deities to give up their spiritual attributes was called *vajra*, diamond or thunderbolt, and the new school was known as the Vajrayana, or Vehicle of the Thunderbolt. Of course the approach of the believer depended on his aptitude. To the adept the *sadhana* or detailed description of the deity was enough for him to rivet his attention on the imagined deity. The simple monk presumably found that his imagination was more easily fixed if the sources of power were pictured in sculptures and paintings. No doubt the layman continued to worship the image as before, and was encouraged to do so. The surviving Pala illustrated manuscripts are almost exclusively of the Buddhist texts especially sacred to the Vajrayana school. They were not in the codex form of European or Persian practice, and though paper was known, at least in Nepal, it seems to have been rarely employed. The favourite material was the leaf of the palmyra palm, of which the best quality was grown in South India, Ceylon and Bengal. This dictated the shape and dimensions of the page, imposing a long, narrow format measuring about 22 by 2 ½ inches. The paintings set in the text were consequently very small and rarely exceed 2 ½ by 3 inches. The palmyra leaf is exceptionally durable and elastic, and gives a good, smooth painting surface. The leaves were threaded on cords and enclosed by wooden covers to combat the ravages of insects and climate. The insides of the covers were also painted, rather more ambitiously since the artist had a larger field on which to work. None of the illustrated manuscripts which have survived is earlier than the eleventh century, nor is there any essential difference in style between the Pala paintings and the contemporary ones of Nepal, many of which were commissioned from the Pala monasteries. One of the most important texts for the follower of Vajrayana was the *Prajnaparamita*, or the Perfection of Wisdom. A fine copy of the version in eight thousand lines is now preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. It was written at the monastery of Nalanda in the fifteenth year of the reign of the Pala King, Ramapala, that is, in the last quarter of the eleventh century. Six pages are illustrated and the insides of both wooden covers. The centre painting on the back cover is of the Bodhisattva Prajnaparamita herself, four-armed, two hands in the gesture of teaching, the other two holding a rosary and a palm-leaf book. Framed in the foliate tails of two swans, she is seated on a lion-throne, flanked by four adorers and two symmetrically placed palm-trees. This miniature is typical of the period in technique and design. The outlines of the forms were drawn in black or red, and then washed in with colour. The artist aimed primarily at plasticity and naturalism, to repeat in line and colour the ideal forms of contemporary bronze and stone sculpture. To achieve this he made effective use of a deft and sinuous line, modelling his forms by delicate and expressive variations of pressure and, to a lesser extent, by depth and lightness of tone. Touches of white gave him his high lights, otherwise his palette was confined to an indigo blue, cinnabar red, green and yellow. In some illustrated manuscripts, more particularly those from Nepal, the artist used a sharper, more brittle line, moving towards a linear expression closer, as we shall see, to the miniatures of Western India. A third variety of line, smooth and running but without plastic intention, is used in drawings incised on copper plates: this style was transplanted to Burma, where it appears at Pagan, on Buddhist wall paintings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The Pala style generally however retained some feeling for the plasticity of classical Indian art to the last. The composition is usually simple and symmetrical, a central Buddha or Bodhisattva flanked by worshippers or attendant deities. Occasionally on the bookcovers a *Jataka* story or a crowded scene is attempted, and the confident handling of groups in depth gives one some idea of the quality of contemporary wall painting. The status of these little pictures as works of religious art can easily be exaggerated. It is hardly possible to see in the miniature of Prajnaparamita, for example, a rich and manifold symbol of a spiritual state to be striven for, a sacred text to be revered and a goddess to be worshipped or compelled by magic. The Pala style was not capable of supporting this load of meaning. The original impulse of classical art in this region had largely spent itself by the early ninth century. Thereafter by stages familiar in bronze and stone sculpture it had been slowly emptied of its real emotional content. By the eleventh century little was left save a carelessly brilliant technique, and a charming formula for the human figure, elegant, neat-limbed and vivacious. Yet the style, like the form of Buddhism it served, had life of a sort and a curious persistence outside India.

Illustration page 52

When the Muslim conquest flowed over Bihar and Bengal in the first half of the thirteenth century, those monks and artists who escaped the destruction of the monasteries fled to Nepal, to reinforce the style which had taken root three centuries earlier. Even as late as the sixteenth century a Nepalese miniature or temple banner still retained something of the quick and lively handling of the Pala style.

A little earlier than the oldest Pala illustrated manuscripts is a small group of Buddhist manuscripts written on birch bark and, more rarely, palm leaf, from Kashmir, the wooden covers of which are illustrated. The technique and simple compositions are those of Eastern India, but the style is that of the ninth and tenth century bronze and stone sculpture of Kashmir. Only three of these wooden covers seem to have survived, but they make it clear that there was a distinctive school of miniature painting in Kashmir, as there was of wall painting. Of the latter not a trace remains in Kashmir itself, but its strong influence can be seen in the wall painting of the monasteries of Western Tibet.

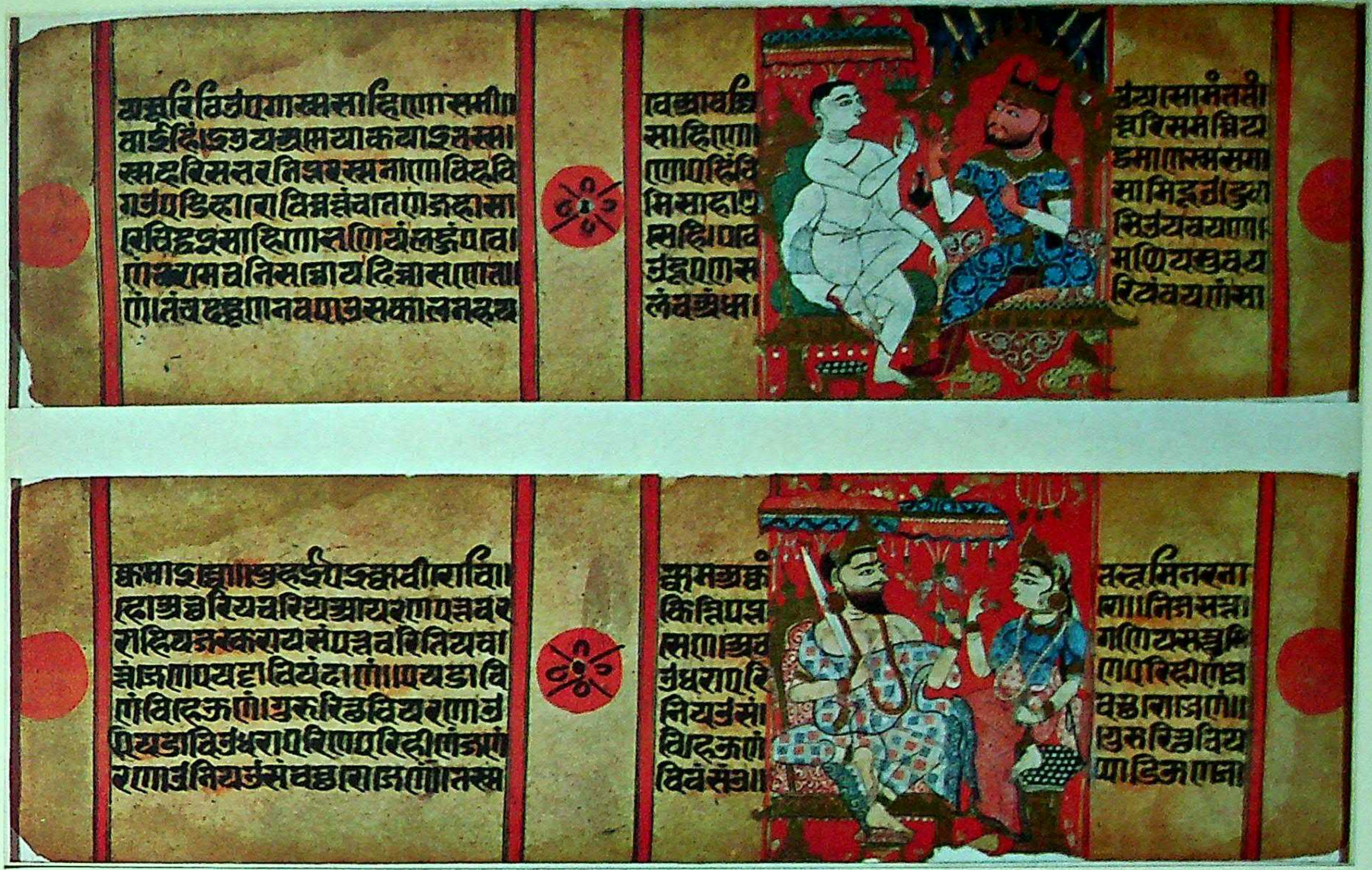
The third important school of miniature painting in classical India, and the only one to survive the Muslim invasions to contribute to the future development of painting in India itself, was that of Western India, which for our purposes may be taken to include Gujarat, Rajasthan and Malwa. Several names are currently used for this school, but the simple geographical title is the most convenient. Gujarat has always been a prosperous region. There is good rich soil in the river valleys, and her seacoast has provided excellent ports for trade with the countries further west since the beginning of the Christian era. Convenient trade routes also lay through Malwa and Rajasthan to the heart of Northern India. For the most part this trade was controlled by Jain merchants, who then, as now, were munificent patrons of their temples and religious establishments. The great Jain kings of the Chaulukya dynasty, who ruled Gujarat and often parts of Rajasthan and Malwa from about 961 A.D. to the end of the thirteenth century, their ministers and merchant-bankers, were able to build temples and endow libraries on the most lavish scale. The smaller man gained merit by the dedication of bronze images and by commissioning copies of the Jain scriptures. An enormous number of such manuscripts and those of other faiths and on secular subjects has survived, mainly through the care of the custodians of the *bhandaras* or libraries; for the Jain has an especial reverence for the written word, which is shown even now by the *jnanapuja* or worship of the books of wisdom which takes place periodically in the temples. Numerous *bhandaras*, large and small, which remain the joint property of the Jain community, are found all over Western India. The most notable are those at Patan, the old capital; at Cambay, the famous and ancient port; and at the desert town of Jaisalmer. After 1299 A.D., when the Muslim conquest of Gujarat was completed, the manuscripts seem, if anything, to have increased. This was largely due to the fact that the Jains continued to control trade and banking, and since their undiminished wealth could rarely be used, when toleration was uncertain, for the building or embellishment of temples, they spent it on small objects which could be easily preserved and secreted away. Also many small and inaccessible places, in Kathiawad, Abu and Dungapur, were still held by Indian chieftains, able in a small way to patronize their native art.

Though paper seems to have been used for manuscripts in Western India as early as the twelfth century, it was not commonly employed for illustration until late in the fourteenth century. The use of palm leaf imposed the same format and small field for painting as in Bihar and Bengal. The compositions are also very simple, a single deity or deity with donors, set on a brick or purplish red, or blue background. Yellow, white and green complete the palette. In other respects the two schools have little in common. Occasionally, in the earliest surviving illustrated manuscripts and covers of the first half of the twelfth century, the line is manipulated, or there is a tenuous wash of colour, to give a sort of rudimentary modelling, but the style is already seeking for expression by purely linear means. The line itself is strong, even coarse; and energy and movement are conveyed by the stance of the figures and the disposition of the draperies. This partial rejection of classical naturalism is apparent as early as the eighth century in Western Indian sculpture with its tighter modelling and angular outlines. Unfortunately nothing has survived to show the earlier stages of the development of this new conception of form in manuscript painting, but much remains of its original vigour in the dancing scene painted on a wooden cover to a palm-leaf manuscript of the *Sangrahani Sutra*, in the collection of Padmashri Muni Jinavijayaji. By the end of the thirteenth century the general stylistic conventions which were to govern this school for the next two hundred and fifty years were more or less settled. The line becomes thin and wiry, absolutely certain within the range of expressiveness it sets for itself. All attempt at modelling finally disappears. The figures are seen either full-face or in almost full profile, the further eye being allowed to project right beyond the cheek. Architectural and rudimentary landscape backgrounds make an appearance. Few manuscripts have survived from the first fifty years of Muslim rule, but they appear again in ever increasing numbers from the second half of the fourteenth century. Palm leaf continued in use until about 1450, though by 1400 paper had become the more popular material, the earliest illustrated manuscript on paper being a *Kalpasutra* of 1370. With the general introduction of paper the relation of length to width of the page changed until dimensions of 12 by 4 inches became fairly regular. The paper page allowed a larger field for painting and more ambitious compositions, and the miniatures began to be framed in rich illumination. The borders of the pages were decorated with friezes of elephants or swans and floral cartouches of great variety and invention. The rich and costly effect was enhanced by a lavish use of gold and ultramarine, and by writing the text in silver ink on a black or red ground, or even in gold on a red ground. Routine copying of texts in what may be called the regular Western India style continued well into the sixteenth century with little change except for a slow but perceptible stiffening of the hand. Perhaps the best example of the sumptuous effect of a sacred text on which neither money nor care has been spared is the well-known manuscript of the *Kalpasutra* in the Devasano Pada Bhandar at Ahmadabad. Far superior however in real quality is an early paper manuscript of about 1400 in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay. The manuscript is of the *Kalpasutra* and *Kalakacharya Katha*, both very popular texts at this period, the former treating of the life of Mahavira and other Jinas, the latter describing the adventures of Kalaka, a Jain monk, who to avenge the abduction of his sister, a nun, by the King of Ujjain in Malwa, enlisted the help of the Sakas of Seistan. On the two pages illustrated here the regular Western India style can be seen at its best. The limitations imposed by size and format are obvious. Nevertheless the contrast of the small, vivid rectangles of painting with the severe bands of the text achieves a modest dignity. The colour is laid on the brick-red ground with light, sparkling strokes, the drawing is deft and delicate, the formula for the human figure provocative and pert, with an eager set of the head, fastidious gesture and angular projections of the richly embroidered and transparent garments. Figures moving, as it were, from the written page into the frame of the picture, add to the general air of liveliness and gaiety, alien, in fact, to the seriousness of the subject, and falling just short of real vitality.

Illustration page 57

It is sometimes claimed that the establishment of the standard Western India style in the century from 1350 to 1450 owed much to Persian example. No doubt the illumination often borrows designs from tile revetments on Indian Islamic buildings, and a direct quotation of a Persian subject is found, rarely, in a border. The "foreign" type of the Saka King, who appears frequently in the manuscripts of the *Kalakacharya Katha* and is shown in true three-quarter profile, the lavish use of gold and the introduction of ultramarine, are more probably due to the influence of the Mamluk painting of Egypt and Syria, with whom Gujarat was closely connected by trade, than the painting of Persia, whose book production at this period was concentrated in court ateliers and hardly available for export. Working in partial isolation under a foreign government which professed an alien and intolerant religion, the native artist tended to be conservative. But, it is important to emphasize, his style was not static, within its own conventions. Patronage was lavish, a great deal of painting was being done, and one can see in the style itself, more particularly in the quality of the line, a consistent development and occasionally an abrupt innovation, without reference to outside influence. Indeed, at the very moment in the fifteenth century when it seems that the standard Western India style was established, interesting and significant variations begin to make an appearance.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century the hold of the central Muslim power in Delhi on the governors of the outlying provinces was fast weakening. The Deccan had already fallen away under independent Muslim rulers in 1347. Firuz Shah, the last capable emperor of the Tughluk dynasty, died in 1388, and the situation was made worse by the terrible raid into Northern India by Timur in 1398 and the devastating sack of Delhi. Thereafter Northern India split into half a dozen states, each quarrelling for supremacy, while the emperors of the Sayyid (1414-1444) and Lodi (1451-1526) dynasties controlled as much territory as they were able around Delhi. The three most important of these independent dynasties from the point of view of Indian miniature painting were the Khaljis of Malwa (1436-1531), the Sultans of Gujarat (1396-1572) and the Sharqis of Jaunpur (1394-1479). The Khalji Dynasty of Malwa was founded by Mahmud Shah, who ruled from 1436 to 1469. His capital was Mandu, known in classical India as Mandapa-durga and to the Muslims of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as



Kalpasutra and Kalakacharya Katha. Western India School, about 1400. 55.65, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.
Above: Kalaka and the Saka King, folio 86 recto. (Miniature, 3⅜ × 3⅛″)
Below: Balamitra and his Wife, folio 92 recto. (Miniature, 3⅜ × 3″)

Shadiabad, the City of Joy. Standing on a projecting spur of the Vindhya Hills and surrounded by more than twenty-five miles of battlemented walls, a deep ravine separating it from the main Malwa plateau, it is in natural beauty probably the most impressive of the fortress cities of India. The ruins of mosques, tombs and palaces scattered over the scrub-covered plateau still bear witness that of the four Sultans of the dynasty Mahmud at least was an energetic and occasionally inspired builder. At the fort of Mandu in the reign of Mahmud was written and illustrated a paper manuscript of the *Kalpasutra* dated A.D. 1439, now in the National Museum, New Delhi. It is of the usual oblong format, and the text is written in gold on a crimson ground and divided into four fields of writing by splendid floral vertical borders and the miniatures. The latter are painted on a red ground. The line is more evenly flowing, more careful than the quick and spidery line of the standard style. The colour is especially fine and used for more than formal effect. The female figures, that of Trisala, for example, the wife of Siddartha and

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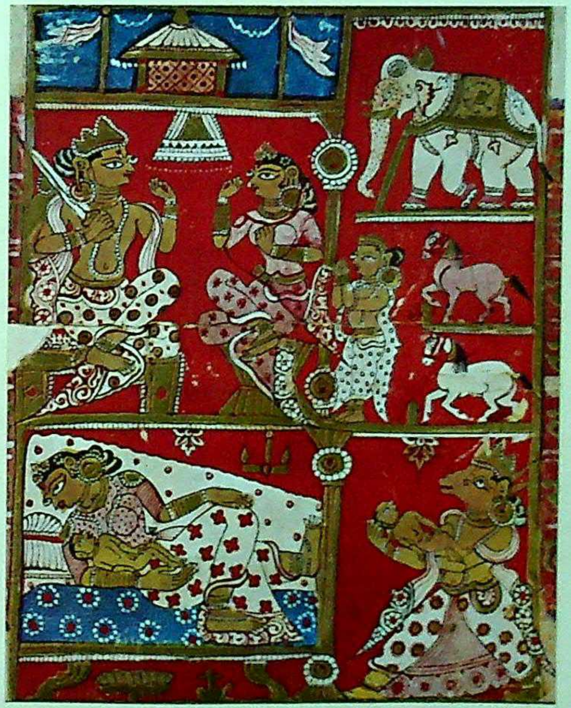
mother of Mahavira, are an excuse for delicious pattern-making, the colours and design of bodice and skirt clear to see under the transparent *orhni* or stole which passes over the head and stands out stiffly like a wing. Of course this is all in the Western India tradition, but here it is used with a difference and with more than decorative meaning. There is a real loosening of the style, at once simpler and more expressive. The status of the 1439 *Kalpasutra* is made more difficult to interpret by the existence of another manuscript from Mandu, undated but of about the middle of the fifteenth century, equally ambitious but in standard Western India style. This should prevent one perhaps from being too precipitate in establishing a Mandu School on the basis of the 1439 manuscript until more evidence is available on the organization and movements of the scribes and painters. The Mandu style may have been the common property of several centres, and Mandu may not have been the original source. At another Muslim capital, Jaunpur, an exceptionally rich manuscript of the *Kalpasutra* was illustrated in 1465. The Sharqi sultans of Jaunpur played an important role in the political history of North India in the fifteenth century. The last of the line, Husain Shah, in whose reign the manuscript was illustrated, even attempted to seize Delhi. He was however defeated, deprived of practically all his kingdom, and spent the last years of his life in exile in Bengal. Under Ibrahim Shah, who ruled from 1402 to 1440, Jaunpur gained such a reputation in the Muslim world for its remarkable buildings and as a centre of learning that it was known as the "Shiraz of India." The *Kalpasutra* of 1465 also presents a distinct variety of the Western India style. Some of the figures resemble those in the Malwa manuscript. Most of them however are stiffer, less lively than in the standard style, and are used simply as a vehicle for abstract patterns of line and colour. The great beauty of the book is really the borders of the pages where one can see the inexhaustible invention of the Indian artist as he indulges his decorative fancy on native and Muslim regular scrolls and rinceaux. When more manuscripts are discovered, it is possible that the Jaunpur *Kalpasutra* will be seen to stand apart from the main Western India tradition, representing in fact a local movement which had little if any effect on the future development of Indian miniature painting. One thing seems clear but needs repeating: neither variation on the standard style, at Mandu and Jaunpur, owed anything to external influence either from Persia or Egypt, or from painting at the courts of the local Muslim dynasties. That the latter should have made no contribution to Indian painting is at first sight surprising. When the Muslims invaded Northern India at the end of the twelfth century, they were not barbarian. Heirs to Muslim art and culture during one of its finest periods, they commanded the splendid architectural tradition of Seljuk Persia, which to the trabeate principles of Indian construction opposed the dynamic forms of the dome and the true arch. In the vast building schemes of his masterful patrons the hand of the Indian mason was soon apparent, first in decorative detail, then in planning and design. During the next three centuries this fruitful union of two apparently incompatible aesthetics was responsible for some of the finest monuments on Indian soil. In painting the story was different. It is true that Persia herself had no miniature painting until the end of the thirteenth century, but one would have thought that the prestige of the fifteenth century

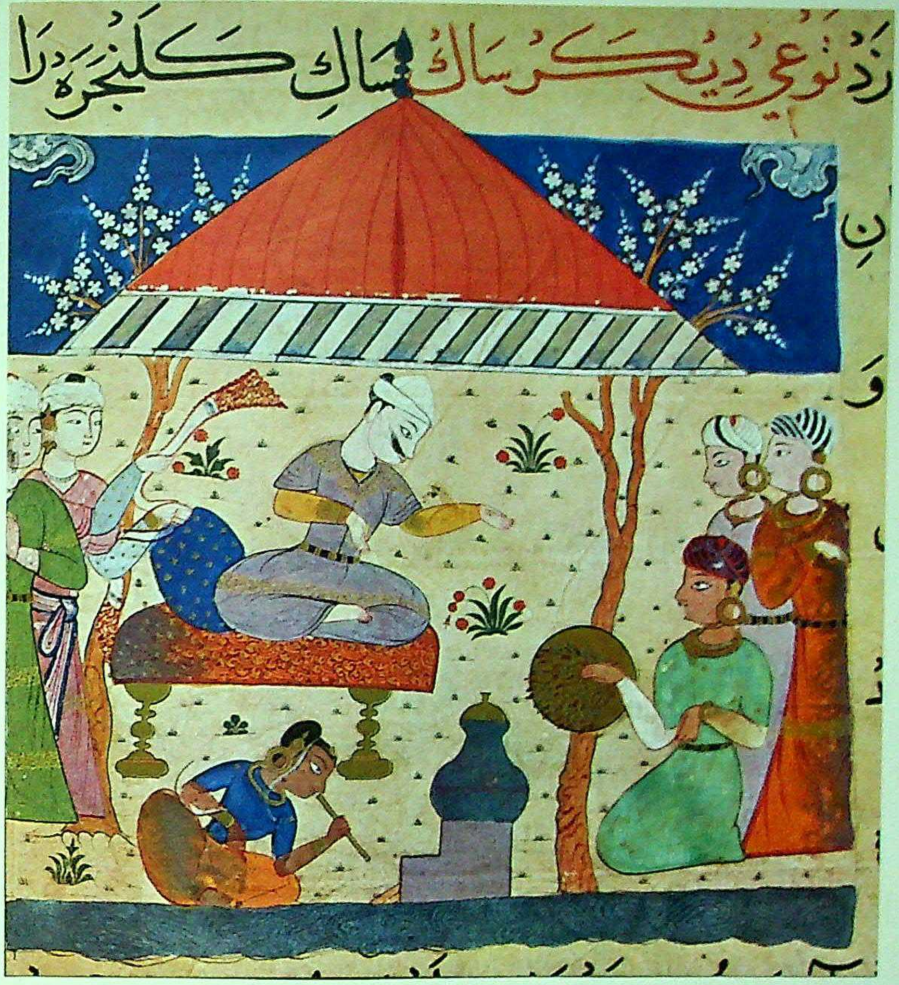
Timurid schools would have had some effect, however small, upon the Muslims in India. But not a single manuscript has survived until the latter part of the fifteenth century to show that the Muslim sultanates took any interest in book illustration. Nor is this due merely to the accident of survival, for when illustrated manuscripts begin to make an appearance, their quality and derivativeness merely underline the total absence of a live pictorial tradition. This is particularly difficult to understand in Gujarat, where, in architecture at least, local tradition may be said to have dominated the style, more so than in any other province. From Ahmad Shah (1411-1442), who founded the lovely old city of Ahmadabad, to Mahmud Begarha (1459-1511), the hand of the Gujarati architect and stone-carver gave the distinctive flavour to what is perhaps the most beautiful and original of fifteenth century styles. But the Gujarat sultanate does not seem to have employed the Western India painter. Two pages from a manuscript of Amir Khusrau in the Freer Gallery, Washington, have recently been published by Dr Richard Ettinghausen. They are no doubt Indian, and present a singularly outlandish version of the Mamluk style. They seem to date from somewhere about the second half of the fifteenth century, and may well have been painted in Gujarat. A second manuscript relates to the Malwa sultanate though it is not an example of its painting, a *Bustan*

Kalpasutra: Transference of the Embryo (folio 27 verso). Western India School, written and illustrated at Mandu, 1439. (Miniature 4 × 3″) National Museum of India, New Delhi.



of Sa'di, in the National Museum, New Delhi. It was executed for the Khalji sultan Nadir Shah, who ruled from 1500 to 1510, by one Hajji Mahmud, the painter and illuminator, and Shahsuwar, the scribe. The book, well written but illustrated in a clumsy, provincial Herati manner, is remarkable for the number rather than the quality of its paintings. It has been suggested that Hajji Mahmud was a Persian refugee at the Malwa court from Herat after the latter had been conquered by the Uzbek Shaibani Khan in 1507. From the book alone one would infer the absence of a secure local Muslim tradition in Malwa, and the inability of the sultans to attract good artists from abroad to their courts. But another book illustrated in Malwa in this same period is more challenging, and much more difficult to interpret. It is the second volume of a *Nimat-nama* or *Cookery Book* in the India Office Library, London. This is an important but puzzling document, and needs a great deal more study. The composition of the book seems to have been finished in the reign of Nadir Shah. The transcription of the text in the India Office Library copy is probably contemporary: the illumination and the exceptionally good, clear naskh look early. Doubt has however been expressed on this point, especially with reference to the illustrations. The manuscript contains a librarian's note giving the date 1570, and some scholars would prefer to move the date of the illustrations more in that direction. On the other hand the main portion of the second volume, perhaps like the first, is devoted to the culinary preferences of Nadir Shah's father, Ghiyas al-din (1469-1500). The latter is chiefly remarkable for having handed over the reins of government to his son in the first year of his reign: thereafter, an out and out feminist, he devoted his working day to the training of the 16,000 women of his harem in the trades and professions conventionally followed by men. Some of the attendants in the illustrations have been interpreted as women dressed as men, though this is not generally accepted. It seems best at present to accept the India Office Library book as belonging to the first decade of the sixteenth century. The two stylistic elements which go to make up the illustrations remain so discrete as to give each picture a somewhat bizarre appearance. The general influence on the paintings, the backgrounds dotted with tufts of grass or flowers, or, more often, thickly foliaged, the rocky contours of the high horizons, the flowering trees and scrolled clouds, is that of the Persian school of Shiraz of the first decade of the sixteenth century, as we see it, for example, in the copy of Muhammad Asafi's *Story of Jamal and Jalal*, dated 1502-1503, in the library of Uppsala University. The figures too are frequently dressed and painted Persian fashion, and presented in three-quarter profile. Both landscape and figures have a sort of gauche and provincial charm, but no one would imagine them as by a Persian hand. There is however a type of female figure, where an original Indian touch is discernible. Directly in the Western India tradition, especially as seen in the 1439 Malwa *Kalpasutra*, the contours of the face, here represented in true profile, are more rounded, and the convention of the projecting eye is discontinued. In our miniature where the other figures are stiff and doll-like, the girl blowing at the fire with a reed, her transparent *orhni* making a thin veil over her cheek and shoulders, is a spontaneous passage, freshly observed and directly set down, which makes it clear that something was stirring within the Western India style.

Illustration page 61



Nimat-nama, folio 79 verso. Malwa, early sixteenth century. (5½ × 5⅛")
Persian MS. NO. 149, India Office Library, London.

No one has claimed that those elements in the *Nimat-nama* which derive in some sense from Shiraz had any part in the direction of Indian painting. But some scholars believe that the female type which seems to make its first appearance in the *Nimat-nama*, though related to the Western India style, was an original development by the Malwa court artist and a model for further progress. It is very difficult to see this artist in the role of innovator, and it seems easier to believe that like the rest of the style his women were an attractive and perhaps sterile version of something more splendid from another source. These questions lead directly to the problem of what many believe to be the finest group of sixteenth century Indian miniatures, wherein for the first time since the Muslim conquests the Indian artist expressed himself with a completeness and originality it is unnecessary to qualify. Before describing this group it will be convenient to sketch events in North India during the sixteenth century so far as they affect the history of her painting. In 1524 Babur, the latest descendant of Timur and the first of the Great Mughals of Delhi, left the mountains of Afghanistan for the torrid plains of the Panjab which he found so unattractive. He captured Lahore, and advanced on Delhi, and at the battle of Panipat on 20 April 1526 defeated and killed Ibrahim, the last of the emperors of the Lodi line. The next year Babur was forced to contest a battle at Khanua, near Fathepur Sikri, which was no less decisive in the history of Northern India, and which, with a little more good fortune on the Indian side, might have restored a Hindu raj after more than three centuries of foreign domination. Babur's opponent was Sanga, the Rajput ruler of Mewar, whose Sisodiya clan and capital, Chitor, provided a direct link with classical India. In 1303 Ala-al-din, the Emperor of Delhi and the most formidable member of the Khalji line, in a determined effort to bring Rajasthan within the imperial aegis, had stormed Chitor, then the capital of the Guhaliputras. This dynasty is important from our point of view because an excellent palm-leaf manuscript of the *Savaga-Padikkamana Sutta Chunni*, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, was illustrated at the castle of Aghata, the present village of Ahar near Udaipur, in 1260 in the reign of the Guhila king, Tejasimha. In less than a hundred years Hammir, a member of the Sisodiya or junior branch of the Guhila family, regained Chitor and laid the foundation of the future greatness of the Sisodiya clan in Mewar. The chronology of the following period is obscure, but obviously Mewar under a series of able rulers continued to expand her frontiers, and the discovery of lead and silver mines gave secure economic support to the incessant warfare necessary for survival. About 1420 Mokal came to the throne. He was murdered by members of his family when advancing against the Sultan of Gujarat in 1433. He is important because during his reign, in 1422-1423, perhaps the finest of the early paper manuscripts, a *Supasanahachariyam*, now in the Jnana Bhandar of Patan, was painted in Western India style. Its freedom and inventiveness, and the fact that full-page illustrations appear for the first time, are not without significance and confirm, as one would expect, that Mewar was an important and vital centre of the Western India style. Mokal was succeeded by one of the greatest of the line, the famous Rana Kumbha, who attacked by the sultans of Gujarat and Malwa and at enmity with his Rajput neighbours, the Rathors of Marwar, so conducted his affairs with courage and wisdom that when he died in 1468 he was the equal of any of the contemporary rulers of North India. Himself a musician and man of letters, he seems to have been a generous patron of art and especially architecture. The original planning of the Jain temples at Ranpur and Sirohi shows that his builders were not content with merely archaistic copying. The best-known monument of his reign is the equally original Kirti-stambha or Tower of Victory, which commemorated his victories over the Muslims and still dominates the hill fortress of Chitor. His death was followed by a troubled period, in which Mewar's powerful neighbours were successfully defied and often defeated. In 1509 Sanga acceded to the throne. During his brilliant reign Mewar became the most powerful of the states of Northern India. He successfully played off Gujarat and Malwa against each other and contrived the defeat of both. When Babur appeared in the

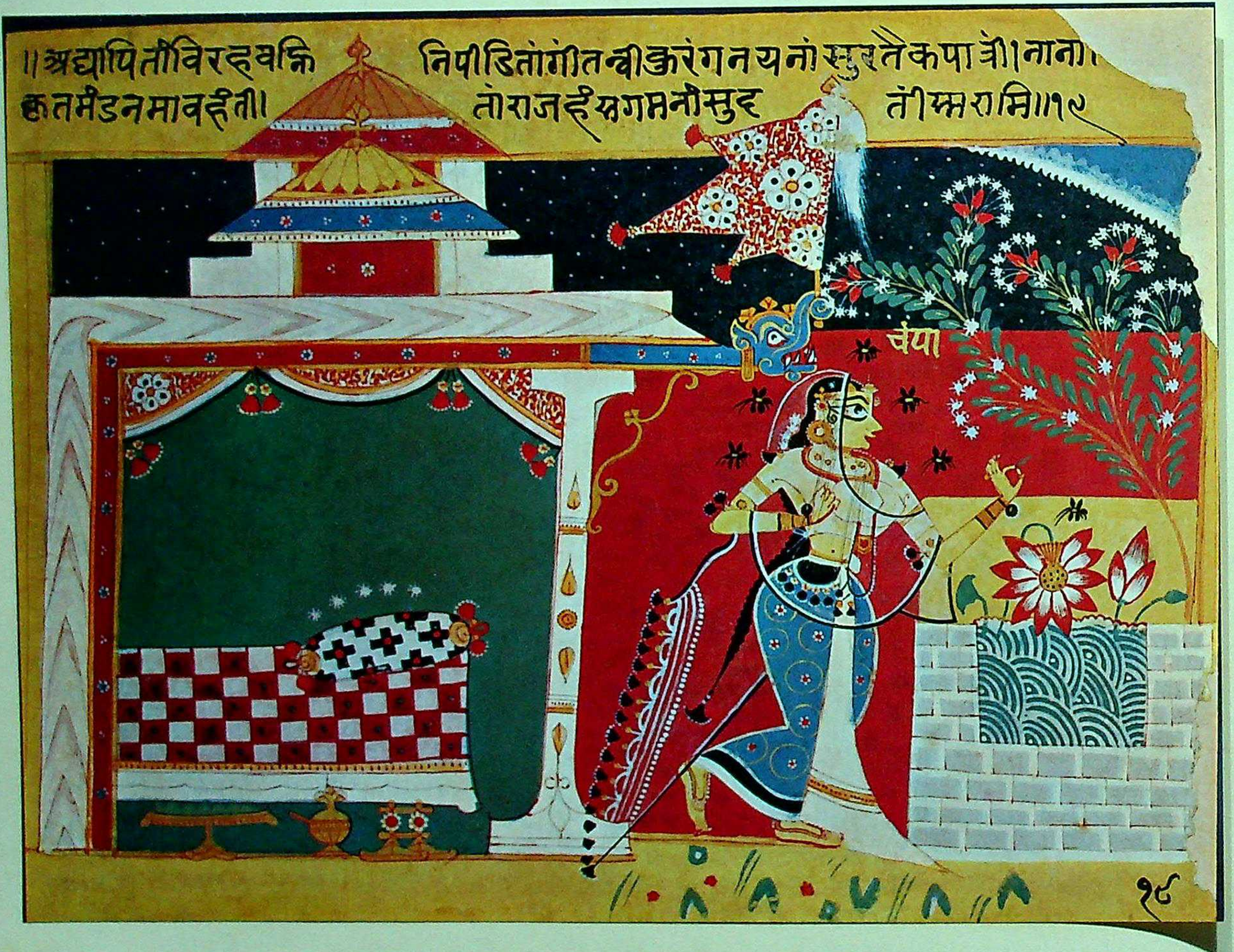
Panjab he treated with him as an equal, obviously intending to use Babur to weaken the Lodi emperor, for Sanga's ambition reached to the imperial throne itself. He realized too late that Babur had come to India to stay, and in 1527 was heavily defeated at Khanua. Sanga died worn out in 1528. It was no doubt Babur's intention to settle accounts finally with Chitor, but his own death in 1530 prevented it. The Sisodiya continued undisturbed and still powerful, and though Bahadur, the Sultan of Gujarat, having annexed Malwa in 1531, took Chitor three years later, it was a meaningless victory. Bahadur retired immediately and Mewar remained intact. This respite was due mainly to the fact that Hamayun, Babur's son and successor, had himself been defeated by the brilliant Afghan Sher Shah and forced to flee India. He returned a year before his death in 1556 to bequeath Delhi to his son, Akbar, the greatest of the Mughal line. No sooner on the throne Akbar began the systematic conquest of North India. Malwa was annexed in 1560-1561 and Gujarat in 1572-1573. Chitor was stormed with merciless cruelty in 1568 and occupied by a Mughal governor, but, as we shall see, it was impossible to humble the indomitable Sisodiyas by force of arms: compelled to abandon the fertile plain they continued to defy the Mughal from the fastnesses of the Aravalli Hills which form the western frontier of Mewar.

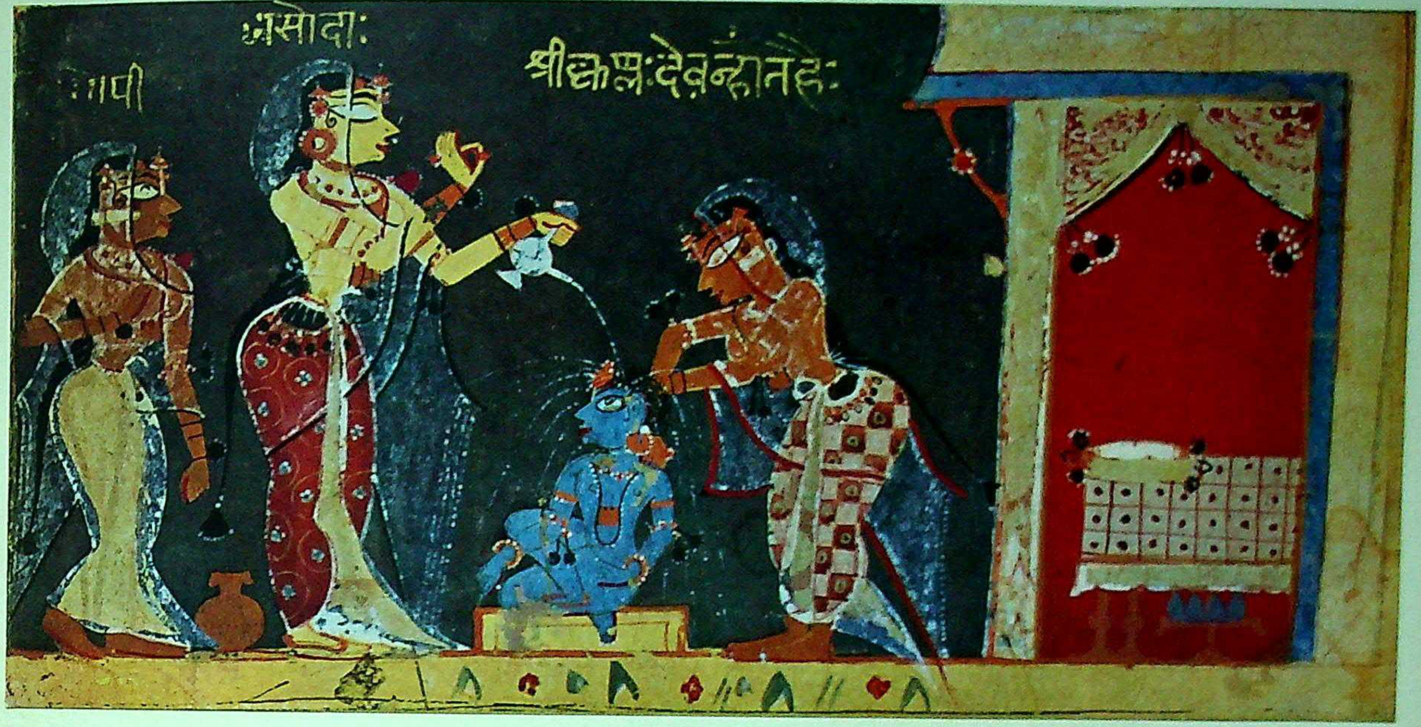
It is in this historical setting that we have to examine the group of paintings already mentioned. It is not extensive. It comprises the *Chaurapanchasika* in the late N. C. Mehta's collection; the *Laur Chanda*, divided between the Lahore Museum and the Panjab Museum, Simla; the *Gita Govinda* in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay; a *Bhagavata Purana* divided among several museums and private collections; an illustration to a second *Bhagavata Purana* in the collection of Madhuri Desai, Bombay; and an illustration from a *Ragamala* or set of pictorial representations of the modes of Indian music, in the Victoria and Albert Museum. This group is sometimes associated with several other series of illustrations under the general title of "The Kulahdar Group," since the male figures wear their turban bound round a small conical cap or *kulah*. This is not perhaps a happy title, since it may be inferred that all paintings in which the men affect this headgear fall into one group irrespective of other more significant stylistic features. However for convenience it may be retained for the moment, but only for the manuscripts listed above. When the importance of these paintings was first realized, during the Royal Academy Exhibition of the Art of India and Pakistan, in 1947-1948, by Mr Basil Gray, he interpreted them as representing a pre-Mughal style in Western India, whose artists, recruited into the Mughal imperial atelier, helped to give the earliest Mughal paintings, those of the *Hamza-nama*, their original flavour, the source of which, then as now, seemed the cardinal problem of the Mughal style. The great series of *Hamza-nama* pages, which will be discussed in the next chapter, may be fairly closely dated from 1564 to 1579; and Mr Gray accordingly placed the *Chaurapanchasika*, the *Laur Chanda* and the *Ragamala* picture, the only examples of the style then known, about 1570 or rather earlier. Indian critics took a different view. For them any real innovation in Western India painting of the sixteenth century was due to the influence, or at least, to the example and prestige of Mughal painting. To support this they take as their main, perhaps their only argument, a detail of male dress, a *jama* or coat with four or six long points to the skirt, a fashion popular at Akbar's court and not found, they emphasize, in any *dated* example of Indian painting earlier than the *Hamza-nama*. Even with the most recent discoveries of paintings this remains true; and, if it is accepted that Akbar's court either invented this fashion or adopted it from a part of India still unrepresented by paintings, it naturally follows that the Kulahdar Group in which the men wear this distinctive *jama*, cannot be earlier than about 1580. How late the Group may be is also debated by Indian critics. Some had proposed the first quarter of the seventeenth century: this, by no means impossible, seems now to have been generally abandoned. A date about 1580 is now accepted by the latest Indian and American opinion, though Mr Karl Khandalawala would be prepared to consider a date closer to 1600. One English critic, Mr W.G. Archer, having first accepted 1580, has now followed Mr Gray and has dated the Mehta *Chaurapanchasika* and the Lahore and Panjab Museums' *Laur Chanda* to about 1550, leaving the Prince of Wales Museum's *Gita Govinda* at about 1580. The difference between the two groups of critics is not merely an academic one of two or three decades, but represents two diametrically opposed views of the relation between the Kulahdar Group and Mughal painting of the Akbar period. The provenance of the Kulahdar Group is equally debated. Mr Gray proposed a Western India school; Mr Archer first Jaunpur and then the Muslim Kingdom of Malwa for his early group and Mewar for the *Gita Govinda*; Indian critics, having first suggested Jaunpur, now consider that the evidence does not at present warrant a decision, Jaunpur, Delhi and Malwa having equal claims.

It may be said that it is profitless at the moment to try to erect yet another hypothesis on the very slender facts, yet the historical importance and intrinsic beauty of the Group are such that it is impossible to resist the temptation. In any case one's interpretation of the Kulahdar Group conditions one's interpretation of Indian painting for the whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The circumstantial evidence is small but perhaps significant: the Prince of Wales Museum's *Gita Govinda* is said to have been acquired in Mewar, the Mehta *Chaurapanchasika* in Pratapgadh, in the territory previously called the Kanthal or Boundary, on the southern borders of Mewar. The state of Pratapgadh was founded by one Bika, a descendant of Rana Mokal of Mewar, in 1553, remained closely associated with Mewar and was occupied by her troops in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. Finally, a set of *Ragamala* paintings which will be discussed in a later chapter, was painted in Mewar in 1605. It is generally admitted that it bears some close relationship to the Kulahdar Group. It was once argued that it was the beginning of the style: this is hardly possible and is no longer accepted. It is either the end of the Kulahdar Group style or a provincial version of it. Now the Indian critics and Mr Gray rightly emphasize that all the analysable elements of the Kulahdar Group style are a direct growth from the style of the Western India School. It shares with early Akbari painting neither quality nor intention of line, colour or design. Its mood of romantic poetry could not be more foreign to the realist Mughal vision. It is, if one may use the phrase, essentially native and Indian. We cannot, it is true, at the moment indicate even in general terms the actual evolution from the fifteenth century Western India style into that of the Kulahdar Group. The intermediate steps are missing. In any case, the Kulahdar style is original, the first truly original style of post-classical Northern India, and the original is, by definition, the unexpected, inexplicable merely by the elements which go to its composition and may be separated out by the historian of art. Consequently, it is extremely difficult to follow those who believe that Mughal painting in some obscure way by its prestige, certainly not by its style, stimulated into sudden growth what they see as a centuries-old static style. Reject this view and the field of possibility for the provenance and date of these lovely pictures is narrowed considerably. We must find a region where the Western India style was still a live art, full of meaning and potential for its artists, in a society itself alive and developing. This seems to rule out a Muslim court, and, indeed, a Muslim province. The Indian critics seem rightly to reject Mr Archer's suggestion that the Malwa *Nimat-nama* was the source of the Kulahdar Group style. The female type, like the landscape backgrounds, looks derivative, and there really is no evidence to support his view that Bahadur, the son of Sher Shah's governor in Malwa, was the patron of this painting. An attribution to Malwa about 1580, when the province was under Mughal governors, is no more convincing. Many forts especially in north-east Malwa, were, it is true, controlled by Hindu chiefs, but the situation was not conspicuously suitable for the sudden emergence of a great new style. There has never been much to recommend Jaunpur as the centre, still less now that the Bharat Kala Bhavan of Banaras has acquired an illustrated manuscript of the *Mrigavati*, a romance composed in 1501 by the poet Kutban in Eastern Hindi or Avadhi, the language of the province of Jaunpur. The lively but very simple illustrations to this manuscript are another example of the loosening of the Western India style, distinctive and perhaps peculiar to its region, but with no relation to the style of the great Kulahdar Group. The figures are seen in true profile, and the convention of the projecting eye has been abandoned. The men wear a Kulahdar type turban. Rai Anand Krishna has proposed a date of about 1540 for this manuscript. In 1540, the year of Sher Shah's victory over Humayun, a manuscript of the *Mahapurana*, a text as sacred to the Digambar sect of the Jains as the *Kalpasutra* was to the Svetambars, was illustrated at Palam, now a suburb of Delhi. It is preserved in the library of the Bade Diwanji Digambar Mandir, Jaipur. When it is fully published it will be seen that its importance as a document for the history of Indian painting of the sixteenth century cannot be exaggerated. It exhibits a development of the Western India School parallel to that of the *Mrigavati* manuscript though quite different in actual style. A manuscript with few pretensions to artistic merit of a text no doubt repeatedly copied, it shows that by 1540 the effects of the new movement in Western India painting had been felt even by the painters who served the Digambaras, a sect comparatively uninfluential in North India. Moreover it contains several simplified and provincial versions of characteristic features of the Kulahdar Group. It is possible that the Muslim court at Delhi itself was the source of this development in the *Mahapurana* manuscript. Though Babur and Humayun, one suspects, would with their passion for Persian culture hardly have dignified the Kulahdar

Group with the title of painting, and Sher Shah's brief rule was fully occupied with the problems of war and government, there is, we shall see, a manuscript of the *Laur Chanda* in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, which, obviously painted at a Muslim court, is related in some way with the Kulahdar Group. The very texts chosen for illustration by the artists of the Kulahdar Group suggest a Hindu court: the *Chaurapanchasika*, "Fifty Verses of the Thief," a Sanskrit love poem by the twelfth century Kashmiri poet Bilhana, familiar to English readers in the version of Sir Edwin Arnold; the *Gita Govinda*, a Sanskrit poem by the twelfth century Bengali poet Jayadeva, describing the love of

Chaurapanchasika: Champavati standing next to a Lotus Pond. Mewar, about 1500. (6⅜ × 8½")
No. 76, N.C. Mehta Collection, Bombay.





Bhagavata Purana: Bathing of the Boy Krishna. Mewar, about 1500. (4⅛ × 8″)
Madhuri Desai Collection, Bombay.

Krishna for Radha and the milkmaids; the *Bhagavata Purana*, a Sanskrit compilation on the life of Krishna of about the tenth century; the *Laur Chanda* or *Chandayan*, a version of a popular North Indian ballad in Eastern Hindi (Avadhi) composed by Maulana Da'ud about 1370 at the court of Firuz Shah (1351-1388). The first three are of oblong format and written in Devanagari script, the last of upright (Persian) format and written in Persian script but with Devanagari explanatory labels on the field of the pictures. It is difficult to believe that any Muslim court would have ordered this group of texts as a whole: even Akbar for all his professed interest in native Indian literature did not progress beyond a few translations into Persian. Nor is one looking for a Hindu court simply. During the whole of this period many Indian chieftains maintained a more or less precarious independence in hill fort, desert or jungle. It is necessary to find such a court as is mirrored in these paintings, wealthy, powerful and with free and confident pride in its Indian heritage: moreover, as the style is perfectly adapted to express, elegant, sophisticated and mannered with an undercurrent of real feeling and passion, like Bilhana's poem itself, which should give its name to the style. If this estimate of the pictures is just, Mewar is their only possible source, and Mewar in the days of her greatness before the 1568 sack of Chitor by Akbar. After that date the Sisodiyas were on the run, living, unless bardic tradition exaggerates, from hand to mouth in the high valleys of the Aravalli Hills. Again, the discovery of the 1540 *Mahapurana* in which the influence of the *Chaurapanchasika* style is felt either directly or at second hand, forces the date back even farther into the reign of Sanga, when Mewar was perhaps the most important of Northern Indian states, and perhaps earlier still if it is believed that the "Indian" female type of the Malwa *Nimat-nama* owes something to the splendid women of the *Chaurapanchasika* style.

It has already been said that the "primitives" of the *Chaurapanchasika* style have not yet come to light. This applies equally to whatever theory is adopted, for it is hardly possible to see the Malwa *Nimat-nama* or the 1540 *Mahapurana* in this role. It should however have been mentioned that during the fifteenth century the standard Western India style had been used to illustrate Vaishnava texts such as the *Balagopala Stuti*, and secular love poems, of which a long scroll on cloth of the *Vasanta Vilasa*, written, at Ahmadabad in 1451, is the best known example. These and other large Jain paintings on cloth make it clear that the style which served the fairly rigid iconography of the standard Jain texts was capable of a remarkably spirited extension of its range when applied to a freer subject. No doubt many surprises await the students of Indian painting when the *bhandaras* of Western India are fully explored.

Though the paintings of the *Chaurapanchasika* Style form a closely knit group, it is the N. C. Mehta *Chaurapanchasika* which is the classic expression of the style. The *mise en scène* is of a mannered simplicity, an open pavilion with a low cupola, a verandah hung with the Indian tasselled textile or *torana*, a lotus pool, a flowering tree dotted with the white stars which Champavati strings along her plait: every detail precisely chosen and placed to amplify discreetly the emotion of the verse. The poet Bilhana and his sweetheart Champavati are set against matt backgrounds of black, blue or red to show off their gorgeous finery. In Bilhana we see, as it were, the young Rajput gallant, rather like a fifteenth century European exquisite, with his peacock vanity and careful touches of extravagance in the girdle and fantastic shoes. In Champavati herself the Indian artist invented perhaps his most enchanting symbol of feminine coquetry, demure and studied, at the same moment advancing and in retreat. The forward projection of the hem of the girdle, the great sweep of the transparent, fringed stole, the turn of the head and jut of the ankle are all obviously the idealized image of a dance pose designed to express the essence of discreet provocation. It is interesting to note that of the lovely textiles which feature so largely in these paintings, one, in alternate light and dark purple check used as a bedspread and sometimes by Champavati for her skirt, is also worn in one of the miniatures in the already mentioned Mewar palm-leaf manuscript dated 1260. The *Laur Chanda* is as fine as the *Chaurapanchasika*, and rather more ambitiously composed to fit the upright page, but a little drier in line. Probably of the same date is the delightful page from a *Bhagavata Purana*, in the collection of Madhuri Desai, showing the bathing of the boy Krishna. All these pictures may be placed, if the above analysis is acceptable, in the first thirty years of the sixteenth century. They are fairly closely followed by the rougher *Ragamala* picture in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The Prince

Illustration page 66

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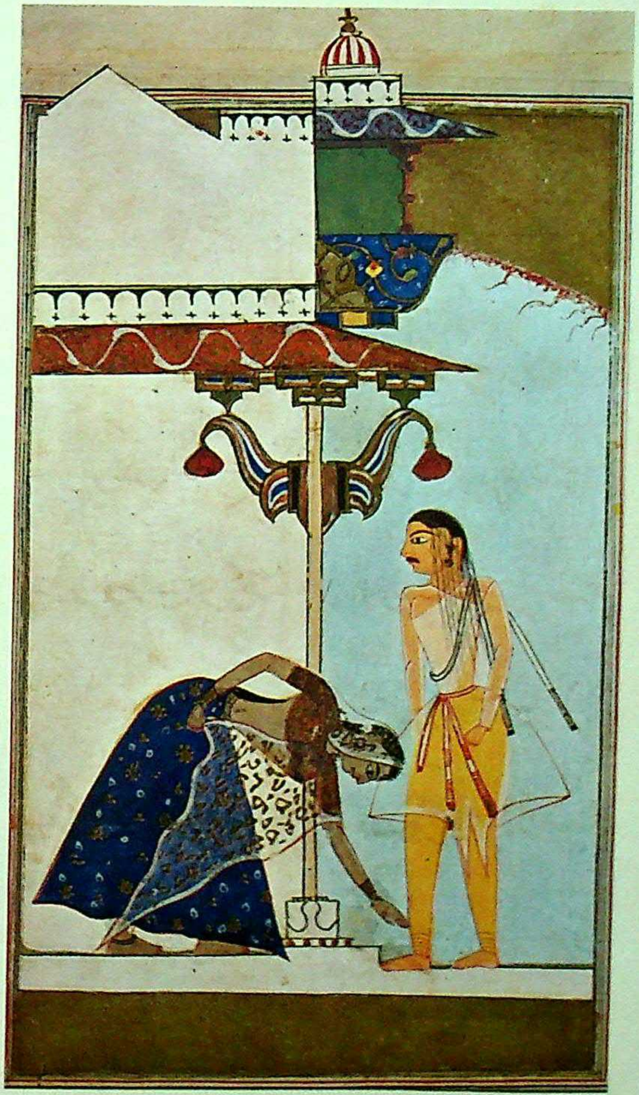
of Wales Museum's *Gita Govinda* and the dispersed *Bhagavata Purana* form a separate group, deriving everything from the classic style but presenting a slightly barbarized and angular version of it. Both books however contain pages of great beauty, and in the *Gita Govinda* the *Chaurapanchasika* Style is effectively used to express the pastoral mood, as on the page where Radha with her confidante look resignedly on at Krishna's dalliance in the forest with her rival milkmaids. It would be fair to place these two manuscripts between the death of Sanga in 1528, which was closely followed by the taking of Chitor by Bahadur, Sultan of Gujarat, in 1534, and Akbar's occupation of the capital in 1568. Illustration page 71

Laur Chanda, folio 149 recto. Malwa, about 1530. (6¼ × 3½")
John Rylands Library, Manchester.



A further version of the style, simple and rustic, but with much charm, is found in a *Ragamala* of twenty pictures in the Vijayendra Suri Collection. It was perhaps painted at some small centre in Mewar or north-east Malwa. Indian historians have rightly emphasized that the Rajput in the pre-Mughal period and later was not merely a "fighting animal," making an obstinate and pointless resistance to the march of history, which, as we can now see, was in the long run on the side of his enemies. The Rajput ruler, best perhaps typified by Rana Kumbha with his passion for architecture, music and literature, and his commentary on the *Gita Govinda*, were conscious heirs of the classical culture of North India. The *Chaurapanchasika* Style is in a very real sense its final, truly native expression.

The above account of the *Chaurapanchasika* Style would be unacceptable to Indian critics mainly on account of the view they hold of the origin of the pointed coat. The earliest dated non-Mughal manuscript with this feature is a *Sangrahani Sutra*, in the collection of Muni Punyavijayaji, painted in 1583 at Matar in the Mehsana District of Gujarat. Though there is perhaps an occasional Muslim influence in the scrolling on buildings and textiles, there is no specifically Mughal influence in this manuscript: still less in an oft-quoted manuscript of the *Uttaradhyayana Sutra* dated 1590, in the Baroda Museum. Both continue the general simplification and loosening of the Western India style as seen in the 1540 *Mahapurana*. Undue weight may be given to the fact that the pointed coat does not appear in the Malwa *Nimat-nama* or the 1540 *Mahapurana*: the male figures in the *Nimat-nama* are for the most part in Persian costume, and a copy of a canonical Digambar text might not take note of one among many sartorial fashions. The simplest view, though not of course susceptible of proof, is that the Mughals found the pointed coat and the Kulahdar turban in pretty general use throughout Western India, and that the former took Akbar's fancy. The Kulahdar turban in slightly different forms was worn in Malwa *(Nimat-nama)*, Delhi (1540 *Mahapurana*), Jaunpur *(Mrigavati)* and the provenance of the *Chaurapanchasika* Group, where it is seen at its most elaborate and distinctive. The Kulahdar turban and the pointed coat together are found in the *Chaurapanchasika* Group, except for the Vijayendra Suri *Ragamala*, and in two important manuscripts of the *Laur Chanda*, one of which, a large fragment, is in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay; the other, an almost complete copy in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, was recently discovered by Dr P.L. Gupta. Both manuscripts of the *Laur Chanda* were obviously painted at Muslim courts, and both show the same mixture of styles, Persian and Indian, as the Malwa *Nimat-nama*. But there, the two elements are not so jarringly discrete. The artist, in the John Rylands book at least, was feeling his way towards that real fusion of the two traditions which was to be fully achieved later in the sixteenth century in the Muslim Kingdoms of the Deccan. The subtleties of the Persian formal or landscape setting eluded his eye and hand, and his fumbling versions of the elaborately stylized images of men and women of the *Chaurapanchasika* Style merely produce a sort of clumsy realism. Nevertheless the pictures are held together by a quite original colour sense; a preference for cool white and violet backgrounds against which dark blue, yellow and gold, and much purple and white scrolling are set with telling effect. Malwa may be suggested as the provenance of the John Rylands

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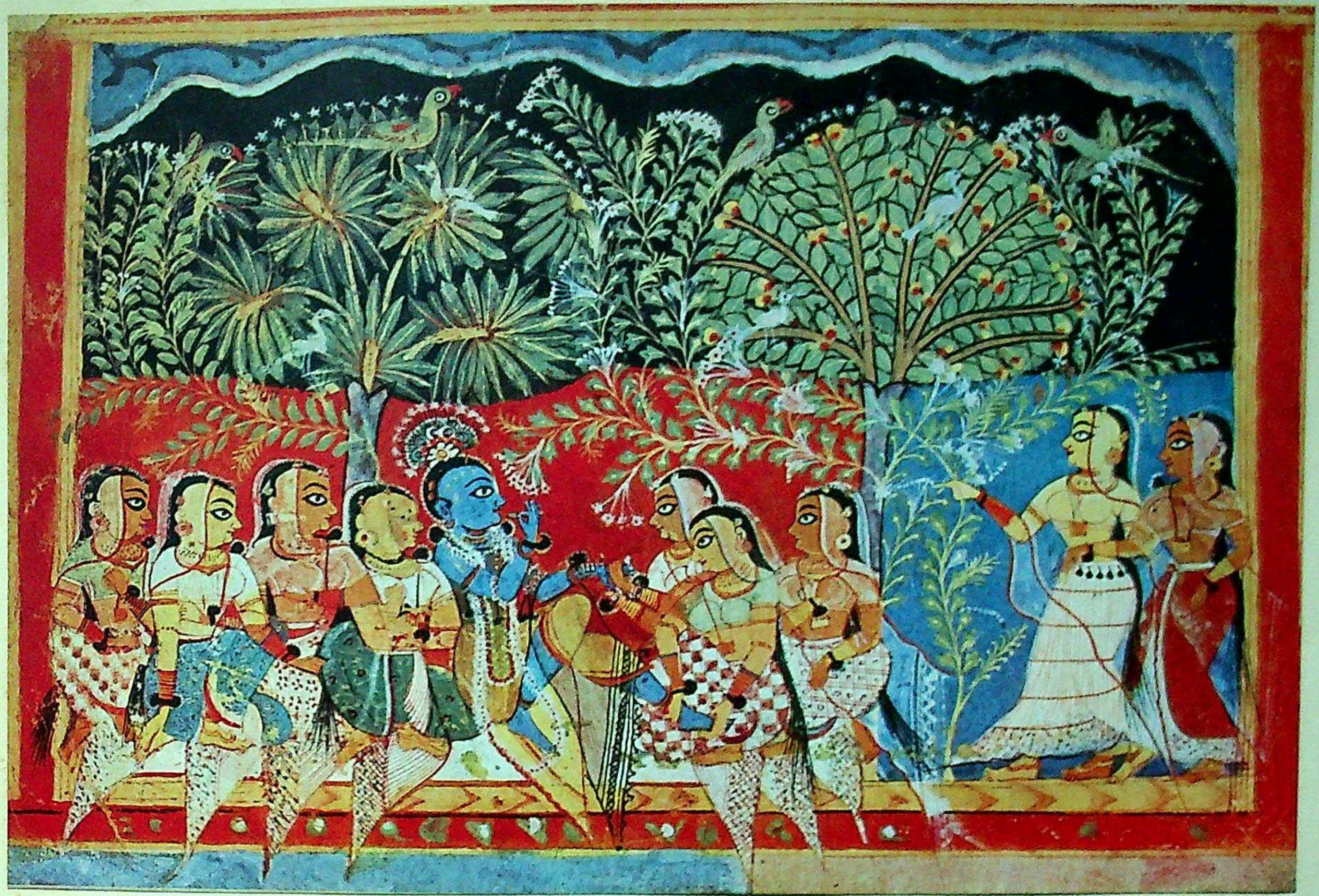
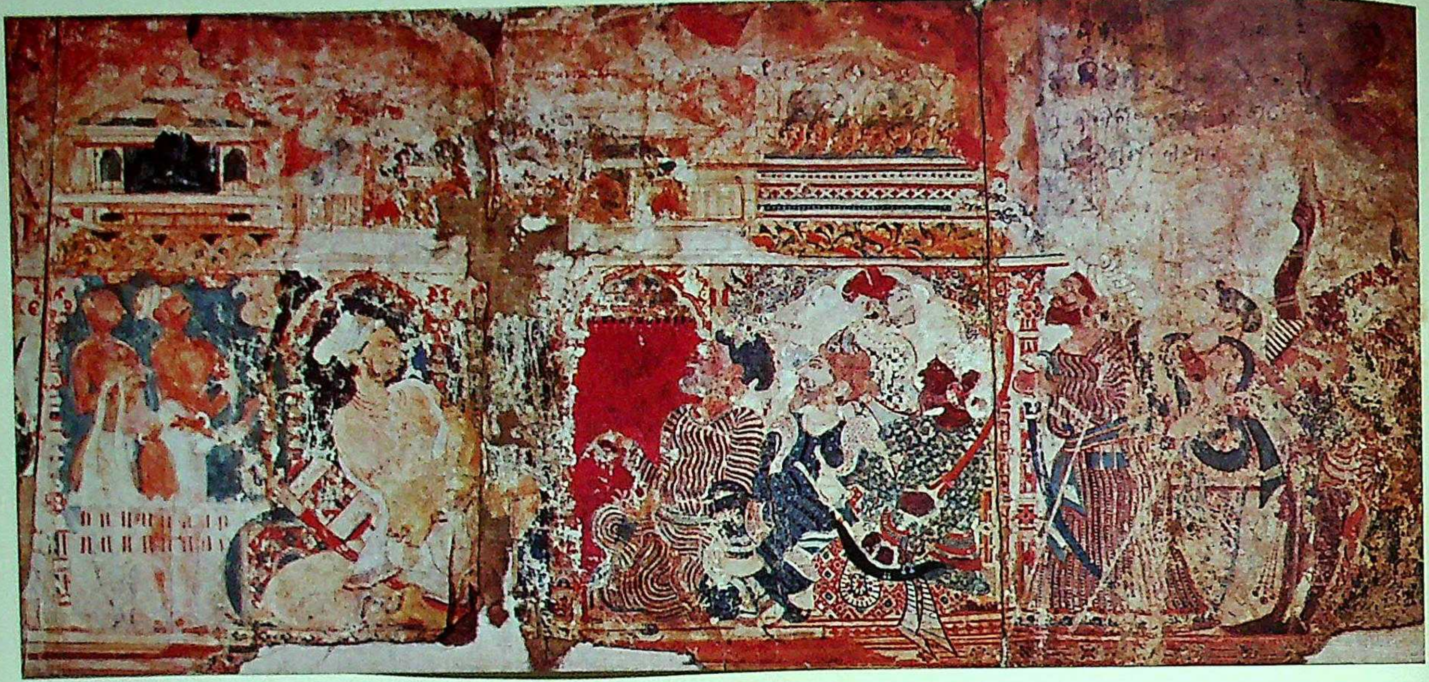


Gita Govinda: Krishna and Gopis in the Forest. Mewar, about 1550. (4⅞ × 7½″)
54.45, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.

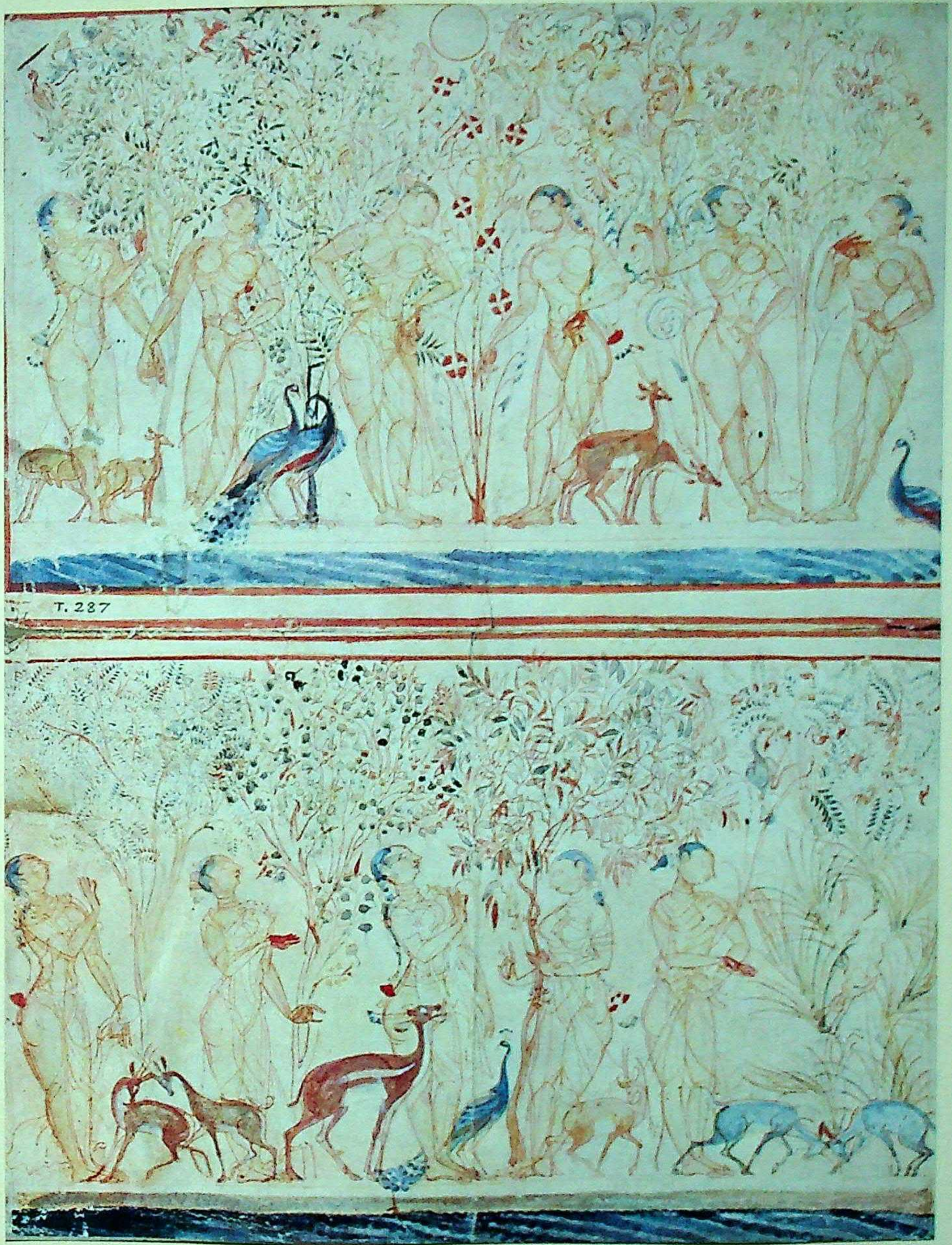
book and a date about 1530 to 1540. The Prince of Wales *Laur Chanda* differs in several points of detail and does not seem quite so advanced. The female figures especially seem to be not so directly inspired by the *Chaurapanchasika* type, though they may well have left their mark on the 1540 *Mahapurana*. Delhi about 1530 to 1540 may be its provenance and date. If so, the appearance of the pointed *jama* and the general influence of the *Chaurapanchasika* female type on the earliest surviving pages of the *Hamza-nama* of soon after 1564, would cause no surprise. The pointed *jama* was already worn in Delhi, and versions of the female type were already being painted in Delhi and in Malwa, which was occupied by Akbar's generals in 1560-1561; from both provinces artists could have been recruited even in the lifetime of Humayun. Before we leave the subject there is one final argument. No one doubts that a *Ragamala*, to be discussed later, was painted in



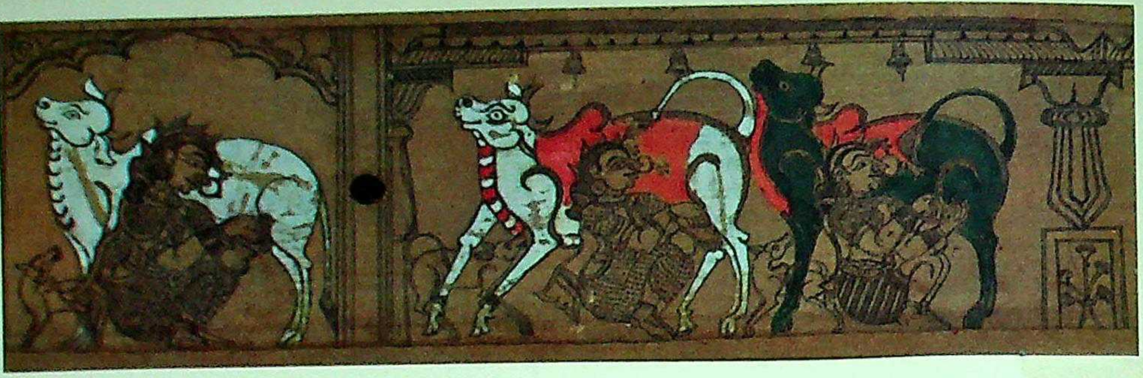
The Embassy. Orissa, about 1550. (Page, 18 × 20¼″)
Courtesy of the Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta.

Mewar in 1605. In it the men wear the pointed *jama*. It is surely inconceivable at this stage of the struggle when he was fighting for his very survival that the proud and uncompromising Sisodiya would have adopted a mode of dress peculiar to the hated Mughal.

The miniature painting of the province of Orissa, though no surviving examples seem to be earlier than the sixteenth century, may best be mentioned here. Orissa successfully resisted the attacks of the Muslim sultanates almost as long as Vijayanagar. In classical India the great period of the Eastern Ganga dynasty came to an end with the death in 1264 of Narasimha I, the monarch responsible for the famous Sun Temple at Konarak. The dynasty continued to rule to about 1434 when it was succeeded by the Gajapatis. During this period Orissa was frequently invaded by the Muslims from Bengal but so held her own that she was able to bicker foolishly and often disastrously with her southern Hindu neighbours, the Reddis of Kondavidu. Kapilendra, the first of the Gajapati dynasty, waged successful wars against Bengal and the Bahmanis of Bidar and even reached the sacred river Kaveri in the far south, which caused trouble with his natural ally, the Empire of Vijayanagar. In the first half of the sixteenth century Prataparudra (1497-1541), the last strong Gajapati King, and Krishnadevaraya, the greatest of the Vijayanagar line, continued perversely to quarrel and weaken each other, so that the Afghan dynasty of Bengal and the Qutb Shahis of Golconda were able to expand at the expense of both. Chaitanya, the Vaishnava saint and mystic, who did much



Gopis on the Banks of the River Jumna. Orissa, about 1550. (Upper page, 7⅛ × 11⅝"; lower page 6⅝ × 11¾")
Courtesy of the Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta.



Bhagavata Purana: Milking the Cows. Palm-leaf Manuscript, Orissa, seventeenth century. (1¾ × 6½")
Or. 11 689, folio 1 recto, British Museum, London.

to popularize the Krishna cult and laid great stress on the amorous episodes in the *Bhagavata Purana*, had great influence with Prataparudra. He died at the temple of Jagannatha in Puri on the Orissan coast in 1533. Akbar, when planning the conquest of Bengal, entered into an alliance with the last able Orissan King Mukunda Harichandana (about 1559-1567) against the Afghans. Nothing came of it and after a short period of anarchy, Akbar's Rajput general, Man Singh of Amber, entered Orissa, which became a province of the Mughal Empire. A Hindu raja however, with jurisdiction over the Puri temple, continued to rule at Khurda under the later Maratha and British occupations.

What little we know of Orissan art during the period from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century suggests that the classical tradition of the province not only survived but developed with a certain baroque vigour which can be very impressive. This is particularly evident in her sculpture in bronze, wood and ivory. The painting of this period was unknown until Dr D.P. Ghosh of the Asutosh Museum discovered in Ranpur and Nayagarh to the west of Khurda a small group painted on heavily primed paper and mounted on linen. The most remarkable of these paintings shows the reception of a Muslim embassy by an Orissan King. The King, with an Abyssinian guard and two attendants, is seated in his palace before the five ambassadors. The latter are dressed in magnificent robes and extravagantly tied turbans. The general effect of this picture with its sumptuous colour, the superb characterization of the protagonists, especially of the arrogant, hook-nosed Muslims, and the amplitude and bravura of the design, is unlike that of anything from contemporary India. Compared with these men, as Dr Ghosh remarks, the courtiers in Mughal painting are mere puppets. Though this painting has been dated to the late seventeenth century, it is difficult to believe that we have here something painted in a small insignificant court like Khurda. There is nothing to prevent its being placed in the middle of the sixteenth century, perhaps as early as the reign of Prataparudra himself. It is unfortunately difficult to hazard a guess at the identity of the embassy: it may have come from Bengal or Golconda. Dr Ghosh also found four pages, painted on both sides, of what was perhaps a manuscript of the *Gita Govinda*. Inscriptions

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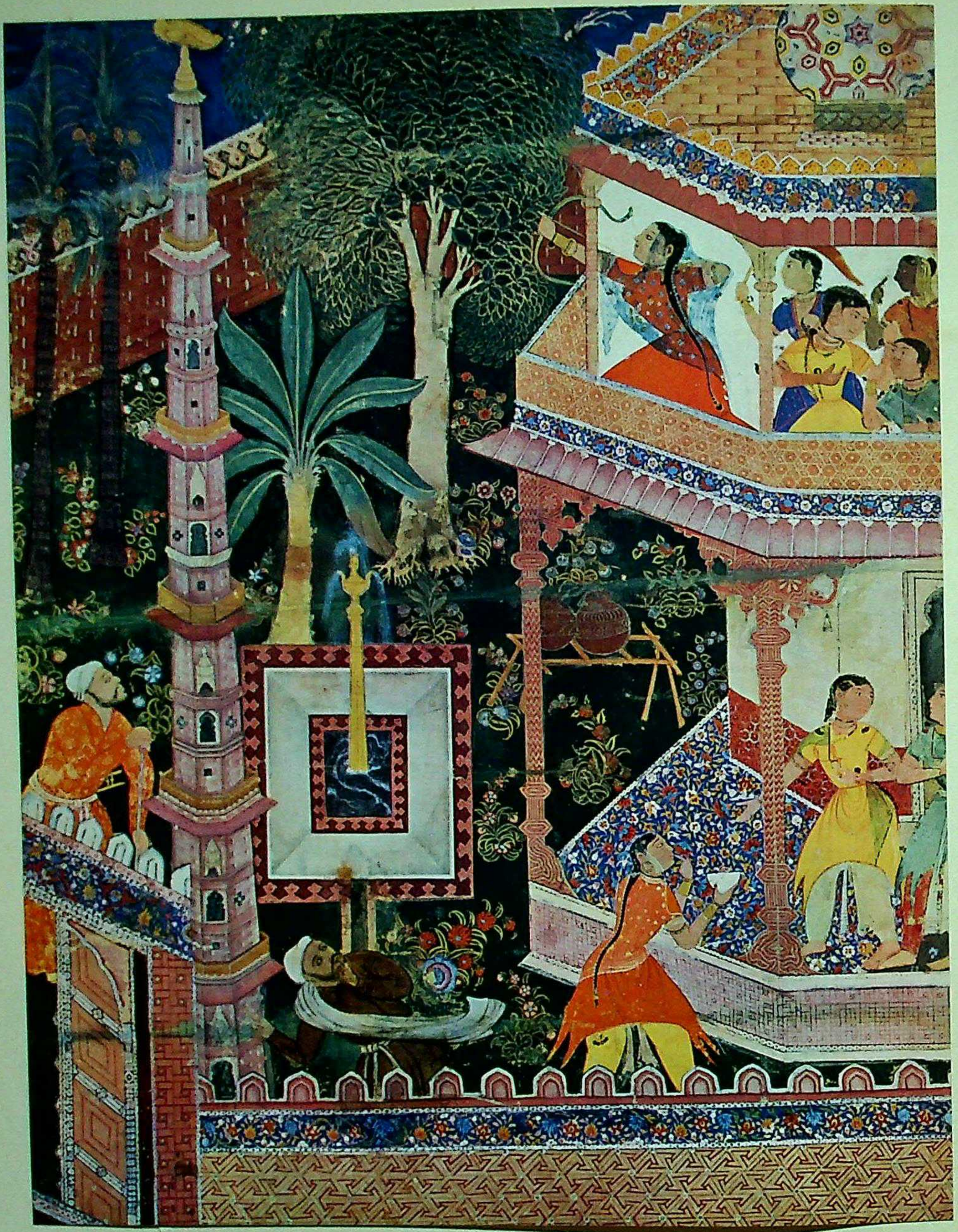
in the Jagannatha temple of the reign of Prataparudra still survive laying down regulations for the singing of this popular poem. All four pages, of Gopis on the moonlit banks of the river Jumna, are masterpieces of fluid and graceful drawing both of the female figure and of animal and tree forms. Lightly touched over with colour they convey the effect of a poetic experience movingly evanescent. They too may be dated to the sixteenth century, and give a good idea of the quality of contemporary Orissan wall painting, superior in feeling, one must think, to Vijayanagar work of the same period. One other example of Orissan painting has survived from the sixteenth century on a large painted curtain or hanging last reported in a Japanese collection. Mr John Irwin has shown that these hangings were probably executed in two small villages near the mouths of the Kistna and Godavari Rivers in territory taken from Orissa by Golconda. Most of them can be dated in the seventeenth century and seem to be in some sense based on cartoons from Golconda, Persia and Europe. The piece in the Japanese collection is the earliest of the group, and, where comparable, is closely similar not to Vijayanagar wall painting, as has been suggested, but to the style of the painting of the Embassy. It may be dated to the second half of the sixteenth century. It is with some disappointment that one turns from these splendid and original, but enigmatic paintings to the style employed in the general run of illustrated manuscripts. In Orissa palm-leaf continued to be used until well into the nineteenth century: an illustrated manuscript in the British Museum is dated 1853 (Or. 4766). The outlines of the drawings were impressed with the point of a stylus, and ink or charcoal was rubbed into the incisions. To fill in the design, sparing use was made of white, yellow, red and pale green. The drawing is neat, and the design always decorative is occasionally quite expressive, as in the genre scene here illustrated from a manuscript of the *Bhagavata Purana*. The most popular texts were those associated with Krishna worship and love poems. The style is very conservative and manuscripts are not easy to date: the better quality ones may have been painted in the early seventeenth century. Paper and with it the upright format began also to be generally used in the late eighteenth century, resulting in a fussily pretty version of the palm-leaf style.

Illustration page 74



Hamza-nama: Mihrdukht shoots her Bow at the Ring. Mughal School, 1564-1569. (26¾ × 20½")
Collection of Mrs Maria Sarre-Hermann, Ascona (Switzerland).

THE MUGHAL SCHOOL

It has often been remarked how closely the fortunes of the Mughal empire were bound up with the personalities of its successive rulers, and that it was indeed a creation of their personal wills. Babur, the founder of the family in India, was sixth in descent from the great conqueror Timur in the male line; while his mother was a Chaghatai Turk and a direct descendant of another great conqueror Chingiz Khan. Their blood was thus Turkish and Mongol, but their cultural background was Persian. Babur was attracted to India because of its spaciousness, thronging population and wealth in gold and silver. Although he enjoyed literature and poetry, he was primarily a man of action with a sense of style in writing and in architecture and gardening. It is improbable that any manuscript of his famous Memoirs prepared in his lifetime would have been illustrated, and he had no time to found a school of painting in India. His son Humayun had both the interest and the opportunity to develop a taste in manuscript painting; for he was driven out of his kingdom in 1540 and lived as an exile at the court of Shah Tahmasp, the Safavi ruler of Persia, for a year before he was able to set up court again at Kabul in 1545. There he tried to bribe one of the Shah's leading court painters, Mir Musavvir, with an offer of a thousand tomans out of his slender resources, to become chief of his book painters. This was not so hopeless a suggestion because in that year Tahmasp ceased to take interest in painting and the arts, from some revulsion of feelings; and, in fact, first Mir Sayyid Ali, son of Mir Musavvir, and then perhaps his father also joined Humayun, and went with him to India when he recovered his throne in 1555.

The earliest surviving painting of the Mughal school is a large picture on cotton of the ancestors in the male line of the Mughal house enjoying an imaginary picnic in the mountains seated in order of their succession. Originally Timur himself must have occupied the centre of the scene, seated in a pavilion with Humayun facing him on a slightly lower level. This painting, in a sadly damaged state, reached the British Museum in 1913 and it is agreed that it is almost certainly the work of Mir Sayyid Ali himself, some figures in it being directly derived from the work of his father and the whole style being in the early Safavi tradition. But the scale is unprecedented for Persia (it measures about forty-five inches each way), and perhaps echoes a Mongol nomadic custom of hanging paintings in the tent. The gold-painted sky and other colouring are Persian, and so is the illuminated frame of floral arabesques which surrounds it. But there is some slight evidence to support the suggestion that there was a vogue for paintings on stuff in India at this time. One other fragmentary picture in early Mughal style painted on stuff survives in London, in the Herringham Collection in Bedford College for Women, Regent's Park. This is of a hunting scene, and also almost square.

A second Persian master, Abd al-Samad, a Shirazi of good family, and a calligrapher as well as a painter, joined Humayun at Kabul in 1549, and also became head of his library staff in India. He survived to supervise Akbar's great undertakings in the library until he was appointed head of the mint in 1577. Meanwhile both of these Persian masters had instructed the imperial princes in drawing and painting. A miniature signed by Abd al-Samad, and preserved in the Gulistan Library in Tehran, depicts the young Akbar presenting a painting to his father Humayun, probably shortly before his death in 1556. This can only have been a work from the prince's own hand which he would thus have offered to his father. It must have been a keen interest in painting which kept the library in existence during the early part of Akbar's reign, while he was fighting to keep his throne and establish himself. Yet continuity there must have been, for it was these same two Persian masters who presided over the beginnings of his great undertaking, the *Hamza-nama*. The mental energy and drive exhibited by the emperor Akbar, especially in early life, must strike any student of his development, for which there is such good documentation in the two contemporary lives written from very different points of view by the unquestioning admirer Abu'l Fazl, and the more critical Bada'oni. Entirely characteristic of him is the first project on which we know him to have set his library to work, the production of an illustrated history of the early Islamic hero Hamza on an unprecedented scale. Each page measured about twenty-seven inches by twenty, and served as the mount for a painting on cotton of almost equal size. Moreover we are told by Bada'oni that the undertaking took fifteen years to complete and extended to seventeen volumes. This was written in 1582, but it is likely that the work was actually done by 1579 when Akbar had declined to definite hostility to the exclusive claims of Islam, and had set himself up as an arbiter of religious truth. It has been calculated that these volumes must have contained about fourteen hundred illustrations, all of a size exceeding any other known Indian book painting. They belong rather to the tradition of tent hangings to which reference has already been made. When we read in Bada'oni that on one occasion, in celebration of the emperor's twenty-eighth regnal year which began in July 1582, Akbar had his audience chambers decorated with stuffs, including European curtains and "incomparable paintings," it might well be that some of the *Hamza* illustrations were displayed, rather than western paintings, of which he probably had few if any at this date. Of this vast series scarcely one tenth are known to survive today, and many of these have suffered more or less serious damage, having been used to stop broken windows before being rescued in the late nineteenth century. Many however retain their brilliant colours little faded and untouched.

Many hands must have been employed in this great work; indeed it must have required that great development in the library staff which took place in Akbar's reign.

Painters were recruited from many parts to serve under the two Persian masters whom he had inherited from his father, and who presided over the library in the early part of the reign. Most of the subjects of the surviving illustrations have been identified and their position in the series established by Heinrich Glück, so that, on the assumption that the work was carried forward regularly, it is possible to plot a development in the style. But no artists' names have been written in the margins by the library clerks, and so far no attributions have been made to individual painters. The early pages are still within the Persian-Safavi idiom in their simple compositions tending to symmetry and restrained movement. Only the colouring differs, the palette being warmer, while the drawing naturally is coarser on the larger scale required. Later the illustrators learnt to counteract this defect by the elaboration of rich patterns in architecture and costumes, while the hard outline was modified by directed lighting and other devices for increased realism. The most striking development is in the composing; more and more each page is filled with dynamic movement, often of such violence that the scene can hardly be contained within the margins, which appear to cut the action at the edge, as if it were only a section from a larger wall painting. One of the most successful devices often used is the cutting of foreground figures, so that their heads and shoulders only are visible above the lower margin. This serves as an effective repoussoir and, within the convention of aerial perspective which was still unchallenged at this time, allows the artist to show the outside as well as the inside of buildings which contain the main action. A giant is one of the characters in the story; and his huge bulk fills several of the most striking pages, while many of the figures are represented as so near to the picture plane as to be disturbing. In the later volumes, especially on those pages where landscape relieves the oppressive density, a new richness of texture is achieved without loss of the dramatic interest and forceful action.

Among the most successful are a pair of illustrations of the incident in which Mihrdukht accepts the wager of shooting an arrow through a ring hung on top of a minaret. One of them is among the sixty pages in Vienna; the other is here reproduced from a private collection in Switzerland. The action takes place in a walled garden in which, on the upper storey of a pavilion, Mihrdukht is impetuously shooting at the bird surmounting the many-staged minaret. The luxuriant trees of the garden and still more the exotic plants scattered below them recall the paintings of the school of the Deccan. The architecture also is so elaborated as to give a clue to the background of the painter; for the rich bracketed capitals and the chevroned slender columns are reminiscent of Man Singh's palace inside the fort at Gwalior. The faceted and staged minaret with its final top is related to the mosque buildings at Ahmadabad. The girls in the pavilion wear the transparent muslin veil *(orhni)* and show the energetic movement of the earliest known Rajasthani miniatures; while behind the group on the upper floor is a dark girl from South India, who might come straight from a Tanjore wall painting. In fact everything points to the painter of this page having been trained in the school of the Deccan. Of course the design and lay-out of the page conform to the Mughal conception.

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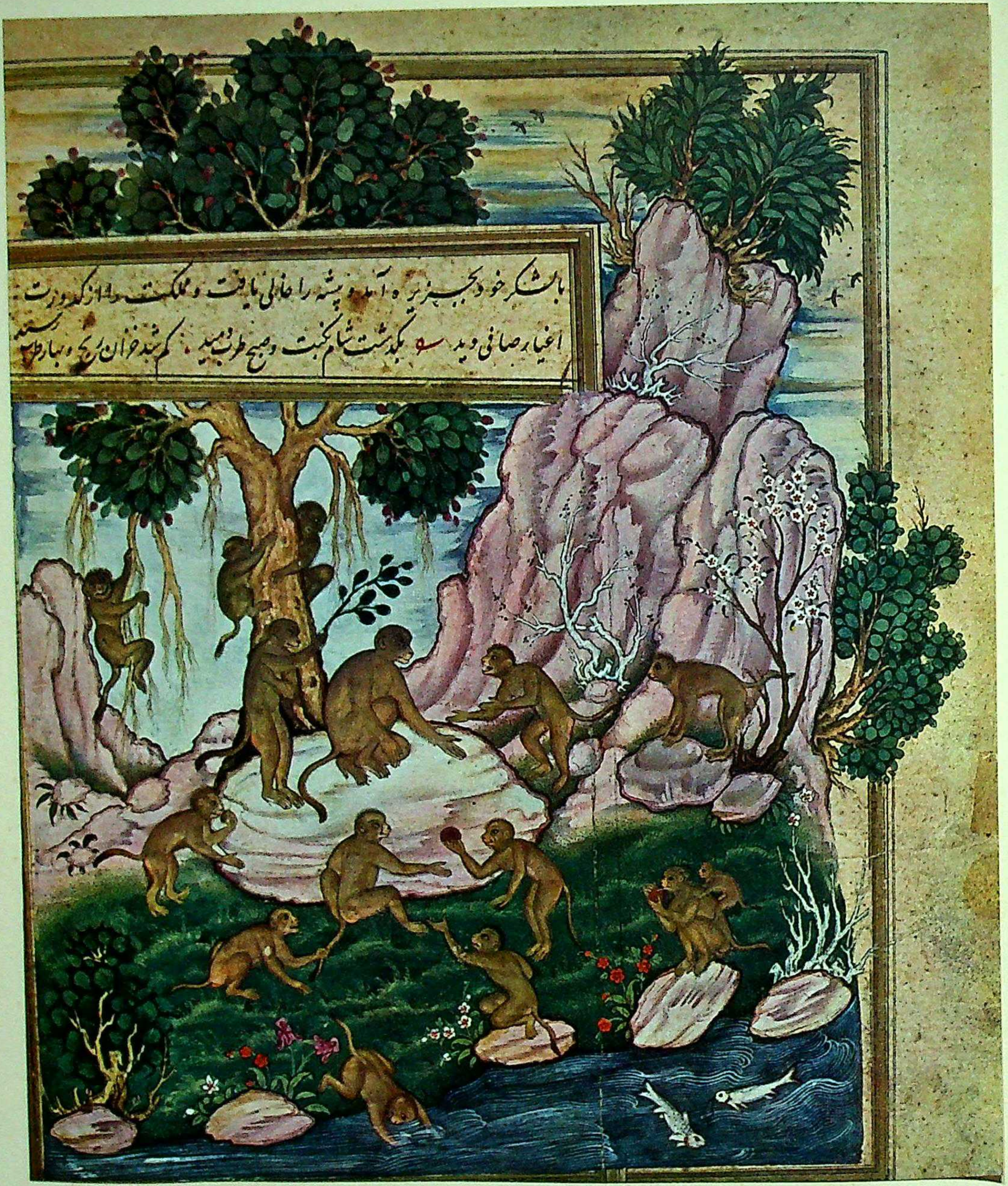
Approximately contemporary with the earliest paintings in the *Hamza-nama* are six miniatures illustrating the *Gulistan* of Sa'di in the British Museum (Or. 5302). This


با لشکر خود بجزیره آمد و بیشه را خالی یافت و مملکت را از کدورت
اغیار صافی دید ـ بگذشت شام نکبت و صبح طرب دمید . کم شد خزان رنج و بهار طرب رسید

Anwar i-Suhayli: Monkeys at Play (folio 183 verso). Mughal School, dated 1570. ($9^3/_{16} \times 7^5/_8$")
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

manuscript was copied at Bukhara in Transoxiana, capital of the Shaibani house, in 1567; but two of the pictures include the name and titles of Akbar in the architecture represented. The figures show the flat silhouettes characteristic of the Bukhara school, and the palette mainly resembles that of this school, but there is an unusual olive green as well as the usual blues and reds. The gold is rich and metallic and there is the fine illumination characteristic of Bukhara. In recruiting painters from this centre, where the tradition of painting of the Timurids of Herat was kept alive, Akbar was acting like other Moslem rulers in India. A manuscript of Nizami in the Bankipore Library at Patna, dated 1569, and dedicated to a prince Ibrahim Adil, who must be the ruler of Golconda, Ibrahim Qutb Shah (1550-1580), is illustrated completely in the Bukhara style. All six of the *Gulistan* illustrations are signed Shahm, a painter not otherwise recorded, and they can only be regarded as provincial work, without influence on the future. A detached miniature bearing the "signature" of Mir Sayyid Ali resembles them in style and in the costume of the figures; and this is another proof of the influence of Bukhara painting, of which there were many original examples in the Mughal imperial library. One of these manuscripts, now in the Chester Beatty Library, with miniatures dated 1548, has a librarian's note of the first year of Akbar.

The *Anwar i-Suhayli* of the School of Oriental Studies shows the beginnings of Indian realism introduced into a Persian setting. The conventions of composing, with rocks arranged in coulisses, closing the horizon in the near distance, and architecture treated as proscenium with extensions to the wings in aerial perspective; all such conventions were already current in Persia before the end of the fifteenth century. Even the richly coloured skies barred with orange-touched cloud sometimes on a gold ground, and brilliant stars on deep blue, were current in Persia before 1570, which is the date in the colophon of this manuscript Fable book. But the animals are at once more natural and more self-possessed than the remote and exquisite animals of the Persian school. They are more deeply engaged by the action, and within the terms of the system as much realism is given to the architecture and figure drawing by shading and modelling as possible. The trees too are more varied and closer to nature than in the contemporary Persian miniatures. Indian species are frequent, banyans, mangoes and palm-trees especially. The waves of a river have more plastic turbulence than would be found in Persia; and in this the *Hamza-nama* pages agree. Otherwise the 1570 *Anwar i-Suhayli* miniatures are very different; they are easily contained within the frame of the page; but are asymmetrical because they enclose the text and extend into the margins beyond it. The colour is strong but not bright, as it is in so many of the *Hamza* pages. There is no reason for violent action, but already there is a greater concentration on the business in hand, a psychological relation between the figures, as compared with the almost entirely formal relation in the Persian style which was imported by Abd al-Samad and Mir Sayyid Ali. In a well-known miniature by the former, depicting the young Akbar presenting a drawing to his father Humayun, for instance, we see a tableau in which a score of young courtiers and a few older servants take part, grouped on two storeys of a pavilion and the stairway connecting them under a tree-pavilion in which the emperor is seated. Each

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figure is related to his neighbour and the whole builds up in a quiet rhythm to a picture of an idyllic afternoon. There is no emphasis and it takes time to discover the principal actors. In the *Anwar i-Suhayli* there is movement, not violent but natural and vital. The monkeys cry and chatter; they are not the idealized creatures of the Persian miniatures, living only within the context of the romantic fable. Even among the animals the actualism of the Mughal school is already apparent by 1570.

This interest in the actual world and its life is reflected in a series of manuscripts which must be attributed to the first half of the reign of Akbar, in which a great variety of birds and a few animals are depicted in small panels among the text of the poems. The only one of these with a reliable colophon is the *Gulistan* of Sa'di in the Royal Asiatic Society's library, copied at Fathpur Sikri in 1581 by Muhammad Husayn al-Kashmiri. This has a large page (32 by 21 cm.), each one richly decorated with brightly feathered birds of many species drawn among small plants and flowers which are lightly brushed in. On one or two pages a rabbit or some other small animal is introduced. Three other manuscripts are known with similarly decorated pages, a *Diwan* of the poet Amir Shahi in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and two of the *Diwan* of Hafiz, one divided between the British Museum (Or. 7573) and the Chester Beatty Library (Indian MS. 15) and the second in the Persian section of the Beatty Library (MS. 150). None of these is securely dated, but a date of 1582 in the later colophon of the latter may well be copied from the original one now missing. This manuscript also contains miniatures of the early Jahangir period, which are discussed with that period below. The *Gulistan* of the Royal Asiatic Society concludes with a picture of the scribe and a young painter Manohar, identified by inscriptions on the papers on which they are both writing. This however is a later addition made in the reign of Jahangir, when Manohar was one of the leading painters at the court. It is just possible that he was one of the artists responsible for the original decoration of this manuscript and that he might afterwards have obtained leave or been ordered to add this as a commemorative pictorial colophon. A curious parallel exists in the double portrait of scribe and illuminator added to the Dyson Perrins Nizami of 1596 (now British Museum, Or. 12208), by Daulat, which carries a dedication to Jahangir on the carpet on which they are seated.

If these suppositions are correct it would be natural to date all the bird decoration among the text in the four manuscripts to the early 1580s and to regard them as the beginning of the lavish decoration of the wide margins which surround the miniatures in Jahangir's personal collection, which is discussed below. Among this work of about 1609-1615 are to be found portraits of painters at work, including both Daulat and Manohar. The decoration of the Amir Shahi in Paris has been attributed by Blochet to Bihzad, but there is no reason to think that this sort of painting was ever practised in Persia. It is rather in the spirit of the animal and plant drawing in the late Akbari manuscripts of Babur's Memoirs and of the early seventeenth century master Mansur.

Showing a similar sympathy with animals and birds, but more Indian in feeling and in the figure drawing, are the one hundred and three illustrations to the romance of the parrot, the *Tuti-nama* in the Chester Beatty Library, which must be a work of the early

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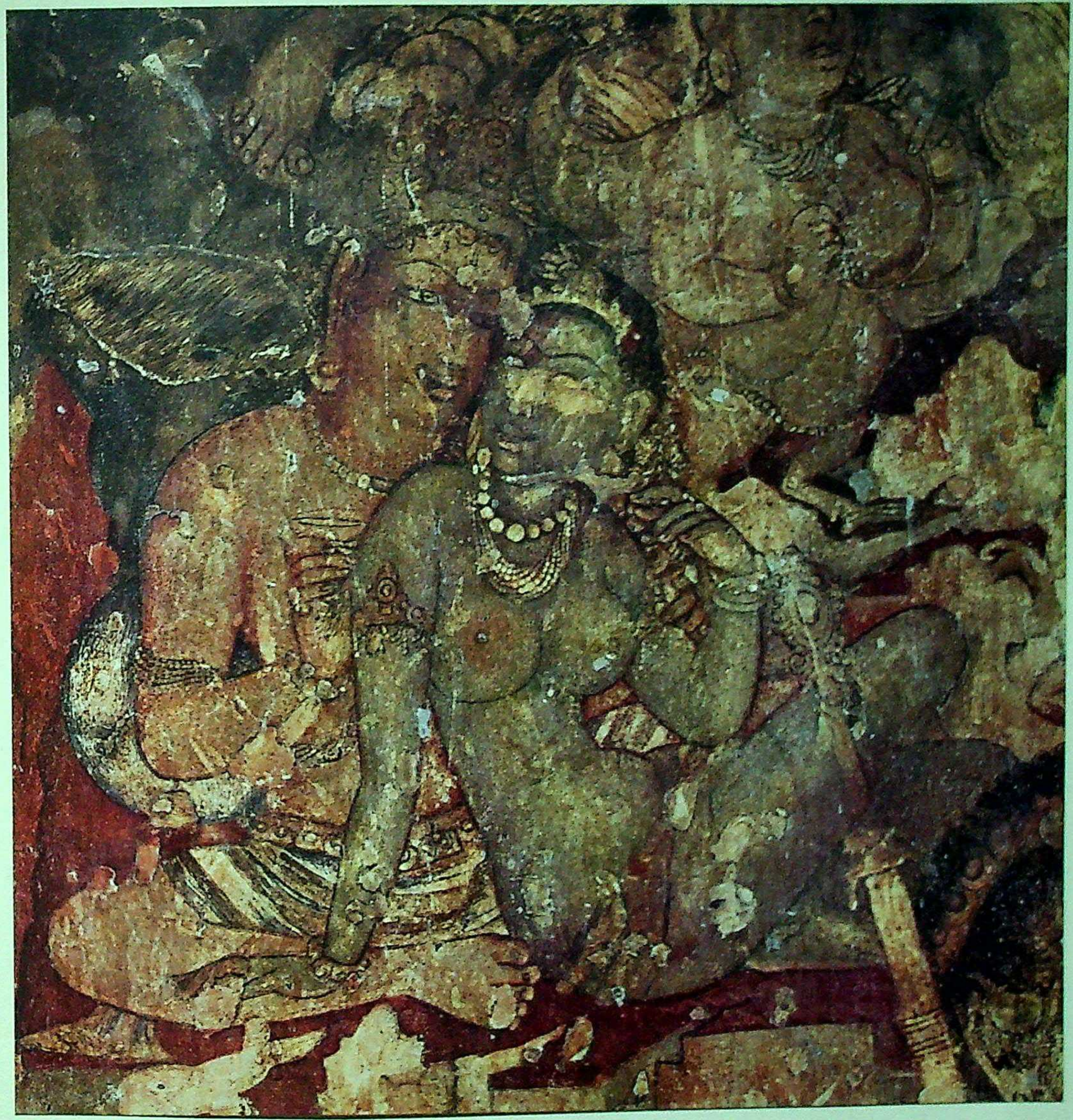
1580s since both landscape and architecture are close to the *Hamza-nama* pages. There is a simplicity, almost a naivety in these pictures which is unparalleled in the Mughal school, and which may be due to their derivation from pre-Mughal illustrations. For this work was composed originally in Persia in 1330 and was popular in India for many years. The men's coats in this manuscript have the four long tails which are a feature of the early Akbar miniatures, including many of the *Hamza-nama* pages. Other connections with this manuscript can be seen in the facial types and women's dress. All this suggests that the *Tuti-nama* must date from not long after 1580, as would also the Persian influence in it of late Tahmaspi type. There is little or nothing of southern exuberance or richness, but much of the softer domestic charm that seems to have characterized the art of the northern, pre-Mughal sultanates.

One of the most sumptuous of all early Mughal manuscripts is the *Razm-nama* or *Book of Wars*, a translation into Persian of the great Hindu epic the *Mahabharata*, made at the command of Akbar himself. In 1582 he ordered Naqib Khan, Abd al-Qadir, Bada'oni and Shaykh Sultan Thamisari to prepare this translation; it was finished in 1589. This manuscript, which was in the imperial library at least as early as 1603, and is now in the possession of the Maharaja of Jaipur, is probably the royal copy made for the emperor himself. In that case its production is likely to have extended over the years 1584 to 1589, and we know that four lakhs of rupees were paid to the artists who drew and coloured the one hundred and sixty-nine full-page miniatures. They are most varied in subject and style, reflecting the many different hands employed on them. All were originally annotated with the names of the painters responsible for them, written at the foot of the page in the margin, in the hand of a library clerk who kept a record of the work of each member of the imperial school, and they are probably reliable. Nearly all are by more than one hand; the one mentioned first in each case drew the composition, while the second was responsible for colouring and sometimes a third for figure or faces. A study of these notes shows that there is one painter who surpassed all his fellows, Daswanth, whose name occurs first below twelve of the best miniatures. A man of humble birth, son of a Hindu porter, Daswanth showed an extraordinary gift of draughtsmanship. The story was that he was seen at work on a wall by the emperor Akbar, who recognized his ability and enrolled him in the library under the guidance of Abd al-Samad. Since the latter was promoted Master of the Mint in 1577, this incident probably occurred before that date. Daswanth was however of unstable temperament, and did not long survive, but committed suicide. The work in this manuscript is practically all that can be attributed to his hand. When the *A'in i-Akbari* was written about 1595, he was already dead; and his name is not found in any of the later manuscripts of the reign. Judging as we must from his work in the *Razm-nama*, he excelled in rich detail, in figure and animal drawing, and as an illustrator. He builds up a romantic effect by accumulation of vivid touches based on keen perception; and the whole is well placed on the page; but he lacks dramatic power and is therefore not in the forefront of the main movement in Mughal painting at this time. It must be remembered that the colouring is by another hand in every one of the miniatures attributed to him. It is not known where he grew up, but he was one of the nine painters, all Hindus, who contributed oblong miniatures to this manuscript aligned with the spine of the book, a shape which obviously derives from the palm-leaf and the early paper manuscripts of Western India which develop from it. In other pages, six of them, he seems to show Deccani influence. One of these, which fills a double-page opening of the manuscript, shows an army in formation, the ranks arranged like a maze, as indeed is required by the text. The only comparable miniature is in the Bijapur manuscript of *Nujum al-Ulum* of 1570 which is reproduced and discussed below. It is possible that this convention was more widespread in pre-Mughal India than we can now know.

One fine page by Daswanth illustrates the *Salvation of Types of All Living Things from the Great Universal Flood* in a boat constructed by the prophet Manu, who is represented in the act of securing it to the peak of the Northern mountain; while it is supported below by a great fish which is an incarnation of Vishnu. The extension of the flood to the four corners of the picture is characteristic of the compositions in this manuscript, linking them with the later *Hamza-nama* pages. The axial line of the cable passing across the boat, gives stability to the design with all its rich detail. Nevertheless it lacks the directed energy of the next phase in the development of Mughal painting.

Next to Daswanth in his achievement in the Jaipur *Razm-nama* comes Basawan, another of the Hindus of unknown origin who became the leading court painters at the time of Abu'l Fazl's account of the imperial library in about 1595. His style at that time is known from his picture of the *Mulla rebuking the Dervish for Pride in his Patched Dress* in the *Baharistan* of Jami in the Bodleian Library, dated 1595, to be discussed below. There and in an elaborate mythological drawing in the Musée Guimet, Paris (*Art of India and Pakistan*, pl. 128, No. 669), he shows his interest in European figure and drapery drawing, and his mastery of chiaroscuro. That he was one of the first to show a knowledge of western technique of picture-making is seen in several pages of the *Darab-nama* manuscript in the British Museum (Or. 4615), a lavishly illustrated manuscript from the imperial library. Although undated this must surely be almost contemporary with the Jaipur *Razm-nama*; but it contains no work by Daswanth, while Basawan in the latter manuscript is less advanced and more purely Indian, even when he is the sole author of a miniature (Hendley, pl. CXXX). This illustration of the death of Balarama, showing the huge cobra proceeding from his mouth as he lies under a tree, does indeed reveal obviously westernized drapery folds, but the landscape is little changed from the early Mughal form of the 1570 *Anwar i-Suhayli* manuscript. In his only miniature in the *Darab-nama* (folio 34a) illustrating *Princess Humay and the Shaykh*, the background, here architectural, is much more ambitious in attempting a complete perspective view of a city. With the help of a panel of text Basawan has avoided the difficult transition from the foreground pavilion built on piles over water to the domes and towers of the background. Even so, the perspective will not bear close analysis.

There is no doubt that the illustrations in both these volumes must have proceeded through the mid-1580s. There is some reason to think that the text of the *Darab-nama* (British Museum, Or. 4615) was written before 1583, but the large number of miniatures



Lovers. Northern Deccan, sixth century. Cave 1, East Wall, Ajanta.

Amaravati carved roundels, yet they lead the eye quietly to the centre of each scene or along the axis of movement. Pose and gesture are effectively used for the expression of emotion, as in the *Fainting Queen* of the *Shaddanta Jataka*. These paintings are not the beginning of a tradition. There is obviously a period of experiment behind the ease and confidence with which they express the same joyous acceptance of life and delight in the beauty of youth and nature as is found in the second century sculpture of the Amaravati School. The paintings on the left wall of Cave 10, which show the worship of a stupa and sacred tree by a king and his retinue, are hopelessly disfigured by modern graffiti, but seem, like the paintings in Cave 9, to be a generation or so earlier than those on the opposite wall. The actual technique of these and later wall paintings at Ajanta is unusual and interesting. On the hard non-porous trap of the Deccan a thick plaster of ferruginous earth has been placed, weakly consolidated with organic matter. Over this is a very thin layer of lime plaster, on which the mineral pigments are fixed by the admixture of gum or glue. This tempera technique has not been found in India south of Ajanta, but seems to have been generally employed in North India, Central Asia and the Far East.

The disappearance of the Satavahanas was followed by a brief period of confusion in the north-west Deccan. In the last quarter of the third century the Vakataka dynasty rose to power. By the middle of the fourth century it had divided into two branches, the main one ruling in the Nagpur region, the other in southern Berar with its capital probably at Basim. The northern boundaries of the former marched with those of the powerful Gupta Empire of North India. The marriage between the Vakataka Rudrasena II and Prabhavati, the daughter of Chandragupta II, which took place about 390, was obviously to the advantage of both powers, and secured the Gupta's southern flank in his successful western campaign in 400 to 410 against the Sakas of Malwa, Gujarat and Kathiawar. The subsequent history of the main branch of the Vakatakas which survived until the end of the fifth century, seems to show that they remained more or less subordinate allies of the Guptas, but extended their influence, if not their rule, eastwards to the region of Raipur and Bilaspur. The history of the collateral branch is of more interest to us. Its most powerful king was Harishena, who ruled from about 475 to 510 and also made extravagant claims as to the extent of his political control in Maharashtra, Malwa and the Andhradesa. During his reign however his minister Varahadeva, a devout Buddhist, dedicated one of the most beautiful viharas at Ajanta (Cave 16). Varahadeva's inscription outside the cave describes its features accurately. By now the plan of the vihara had been developed so as to include the function of the chaitya. The old vihara occasionally had a stupa carved in relief on its back wall. The new type extended this idea. In the back wall was cut an antechamber and a shrine, called "chaityamandiram" in the inscription, containing a huge carved figure of the Buddha, which replaced the stupa as an object of worship. The pillared hall *(mandaparatnam)*, the small cells often with stone beds for the monks and the verandah were retained. The inscription also mentions the carved pillars, the sculptural decoration, and probably also the wall paintings. A second vihara at Ajanta (Cave 17), similarly planned, was also dedicated in the reign of Harishena, as was probably also the small but very lovely chaitya (Cave 19). The two magnificent viharas (Caves 1 and 2) were excavated a little later in the sixth century. Cave 1 seems to be the earlier and closely resembles in plan and sculptural decoration a fine vihara at Ghatotkacha, eleven miles to the west of Ajanta, also dedicated by Varahadeva. By the early sixth century the Vakatakas had been replaced in northern Maharashtra by the Kalachuris, themselves overwhelmed in the early seventh century by the greatest dynasty to rule the Deccan, the Early Western Chalukyas.

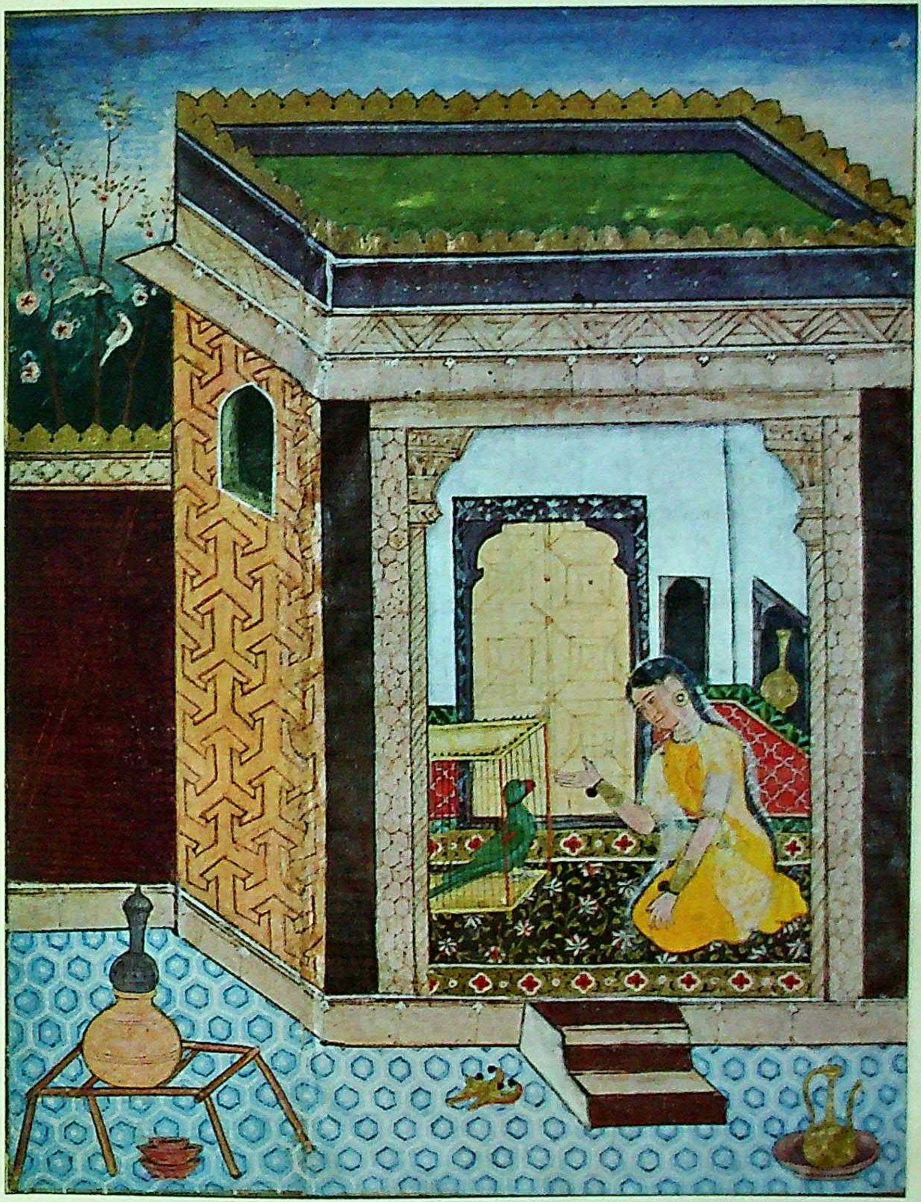
In both North India and the Deccan little is as yet known of the development of art from the third to the middle of the fifth century. Since this remains one of the major gaps in our knowledge, it is difficult to interpret and to establish the source of the style of the wall paintings of Caves 16 and 17 and of the two walls in the "Hariti Shrine" of Cave 2, which fall for the most part within the period from about 475 to 550. These paintings are certainly the finest things at Ajanta. Their still, calm beauty and the noble geometry of the compositions, especially where as in the two groups of women votaries in the "Hariti Shrine" the scale of the wall surface imposes a definite frame, invite the epithet "classical" in a qualitative sense and a comparison with the work of Piero della Francesca. The movement of the line is sure and inevitable, without trick or cliché. The illusion of warm, rounded flesh is conveyed by unobtrusive modelling and shading. The colour remains cool and fresh even now, so that the paintings swiftly present themselves to the eye in the diffused light. Emotion and pathos are expressed by the controlled turn and poise of the body and by the eloquent gestures of the hands. A beautiful example of this is the painting commonly called *The Dying Princess* in Cave 16, where Sundari, the beloved wife of Nanda who was tricked into renouncing the life of this world by his half-brother, the Buddha, sinks fainting into the arms of her handmaidens at the sight of her husband's abandoned crown. The great events of the Buddha's life and of his previous existences are set, as in the Christian art of Europe, amid the scenes of everyday, of the palace and the zenana and of the streets with their thronging crowds and traders' booths, the collocation of magnificence and simplicity which is still a part of the Indian scene. The sensitive observation of the life around him is especially apparent in the artist's treatment of the Buddha's life. On the right wall of Cave 16 can be seen incidents in his boyhood, where the childish gravity of the young Bodhisattva at school is beautifully portrayed. The paintings are no longer composed in the broad friezes of the earlier style, but cover the whole surface of the wall, one scene merging with another, both horizontally and vertically. There is however no feeling of confusion, but a steady continuous movement which is only halted when the arrested eye imposes its frame. These paintings belong to the full maturity, the complete realization of a culture when man sees himself and his society as perfect instruments of life's purpose. This serene confidence which comes from mastery of self, not of nature, is remote from our period of unease: perhaps the reason why the later paintings at Ajanta have received more praise and attention.

Illustrations pages 20, 21

Illustration page 21

It is generally believed that the Gupta period and more particularly the reign of Chandragupta II (about 375 to 415) witnessed the classic expression of pre-Muslim Indian culture. It must be emphasized, since so much of Indian history and art history is written with a northern bias, that this judgement, if true, applies to North India only. Certainly under Samudragupta, who ruled from about 335 to 375, Pataliputra (Patna on the Ganges) became the capital of a power which extended from the borders of the Panjab to Assam. By the annexation of small kingdoms Samudragupta aimed at a centrally controlled empire. He even led an expedition down the east coast deep into South India, but this operation far from his base was a pointless gesture and had no effect on the history of these regions. His son Chandragupta II finally defeated the Sakas, who from their capital at Ujjain in Malwa had been ruling Western India for over two hundred years, rich and powerful on the proceeds of trade with the West. Gupta control of North India was now almost complete, and, as we know from the record of Fa-hsien, a Buddhist monk who travelled in India collecting copies of the scriptures, the country was generally peaceful and prosperous. How far the influence and patronage of the two greatest of the Gupta Kings hastened the development of North Indian art is difficult to estimate. Little remains beyond their magnificent gold coinage. Even in literature the association of the name of Kalidasa, the greatest of the poets and dramatists of India, with the reign of Chandragupta II and his western court at Ujjain is by no means certain. Though Kumaragupta I (about 415 to 454) retained the empire intact, the last years of his reign saw the first Huna invasions from the north-west, which though kept at bay by his successor Skandagupta (about 455 to 467) loosened central control, and the local governors began to declare themselves feudatory kings. The Guptas retained little more than nominal rule over North India except for Bihar and Bengal. Fresh invasions followed at the close of the century, and Western India was occupied by the two kings Toramana and Mihirakula, who seem to have been related in some way with the Hunas. Mihirakula was finally defeated by Yasodharman, a powerful chief of Mandasor, in Malwa, about 530. By the middle of the century the Gupta Empire had disappeared.

This apparent digression is necessary because most authorities consider the wall paintings under discussion, not to mention the later paintings at Ajanta, to have been directly inspired by Gupta example, if not indeed to be actual examples of the Gupta achievement in this art. Emphasis is laid on the marriage of Chandragupta II's daughter Prabhavati with the Vakataka Rudrasena, and her rule as regent for some thirteen years after her husband's early death. It is clear from her charters that her court was much under Gupta influence. How far this affected the art of the main branch of the Vakatakas in the Nagpur region is not known, for nothing has survived, still less whether it was felt further west by the collateral branch controlling Ajanta. There are in any case no paintings at Ajanta which can be attributed with certainty to the late fourth and early fifth century, as there are of course none in North India. It is only during the period of political decline, in the second half of the fifth century, that we know for certain from a small group of dated sculptures the Gupta style of the eastern part of the empire, of Sarnath in Bihar. It is doubtful whether even in North India the label of "Gupta style" can carry more meaning than a general indication of date. In North India the fifth to the seventh century covers no doubt the period of the greatest expression of her plastic genius. It revealed itself in similar forms, represented the same ethos, and seems to have



Tuti-nama: The Girl and the Parrot. Mughal School, 1580-1585. (6⅝ × 5⅛")
Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.

would have taken several years to complete, just as did the even more numerous and larger miniatures in the Jaipur *Razm-nama*. Some of the painters whose names are written below the miniatures of the *Darab-nama* are of Lahore, which became the principal imperial seat after the abandonment of Fathpur Sikri in 1585. The drawing is vigorous and strong, sometimes even coarse, and the colours vivid and even crude, far removed from the quiet tones of the Safavi school—all except one leaf which bears the unexpected name of Abd al-Samad. The more forward-looking artists who participated are Miskina, Nanha and Bhurah, Sarwan and Kanha. All but the last show some familiarity with western art, while Kanha and Nanha also depict Deccani costumes, thus revealing a wider horizon. These are a minority of the illustrations, and these artists are mostly represented by only one miniature apiece. Miskina and Basawan were to become two of the leading painters in the last years of Akbar's reign; and Kanha and Sarwan also flourished until the end of that period. The *Darab-nama* is thus most significant for its promise for the future and its evidence of the vigour of the school at this time. The bulk of the miniatures are dominated by the harsh reds and greens which seem to characterize the palette of Lahore.

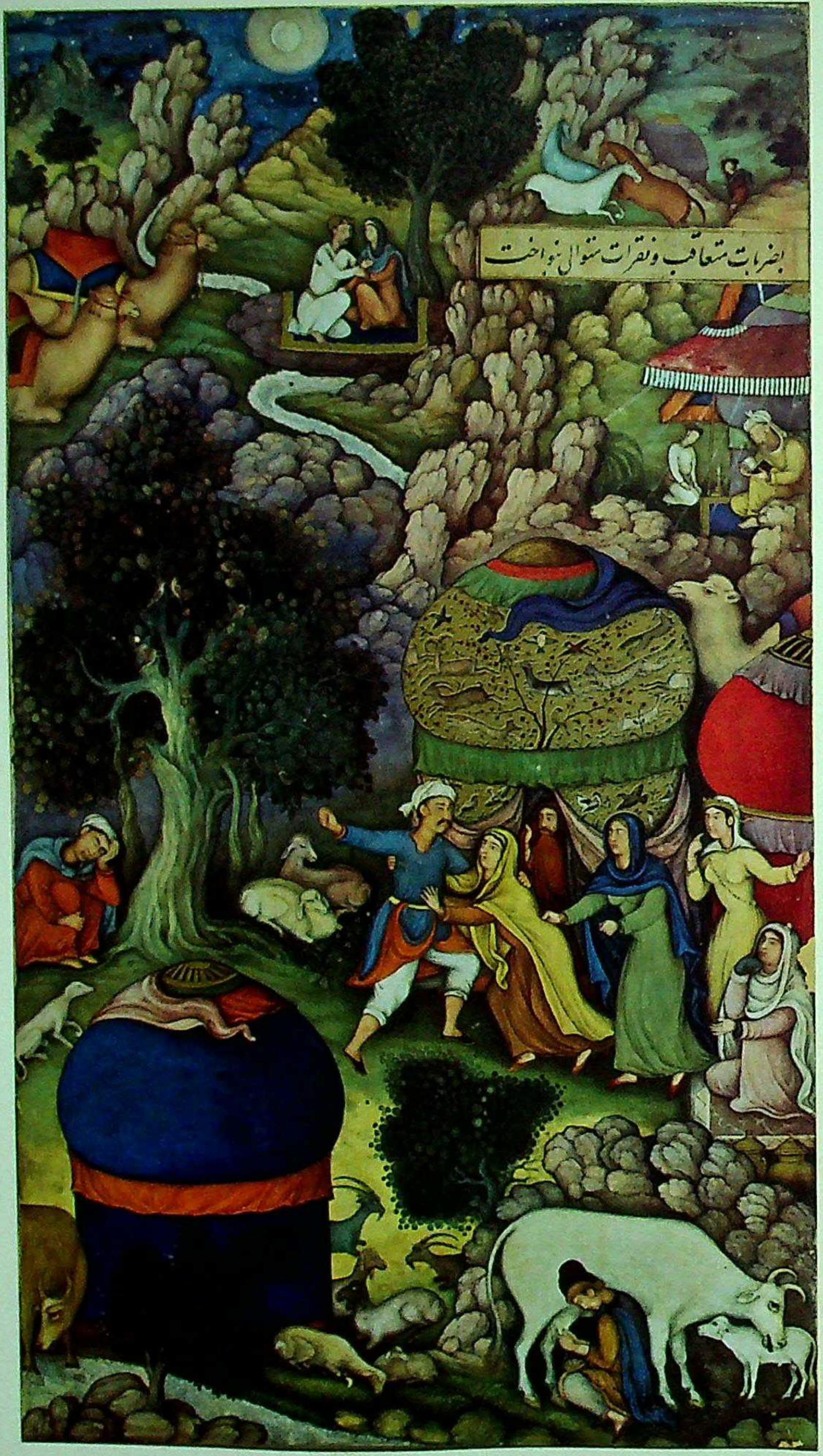
It was in 1580 that the first Christian mission arrived at the court of Akbar. This was not the emperor's first direct contact with Europeans, for in 1573 and again in 1578 a Portuguese embassy led by Antonio Cabral had been sent to the emperor by the Viceroy of India, the first to Surat and the second to Fathpur Sikri, Akbar's new capital. On the first occasion the emperor was campaigning and the visit was short; but in 1578 there would have been opportunity for the emperor and his court to learn something of western painting. In the same year a Portuguese merchant named Tavares or Tavero came to the court from the Bengal port of Satigam; and a secular priest, Giuliano Pereira, was also received by the emperor. From him he learnt of the Jesuit house in Goa, and immediately wished to learn from them the truth of the Christian religion. It was in this same year 1578 that Akbar experienced a conversion through an ecstasy of some kind which he suffered in the course of a hunting expedition. He started to tolerate non-Muslims in the religious discussions which took place weekly in his presence by admitting a Zoroastrian in this same year. Such was the background to his request for a Christian mission to visit his court made to the Viceroy in Goa in September 1579, which led to the dispatch of the mission headed by Father Rudolf Aquaviva and Father Anthony Monserrate, both learned and distinguished men, in the following year. It is known that they presented to Akbar the great eight-volume Polyglot Bible printed by Plantyn for Philip II in 1569-1573, as well as panel pictures of Christ and the Virgin. This Bible is illustrated only with frontispieces by Jan Wiericx and other engravers, and the western influence must have been obtained from other sources.

This first mission remained at court until April 1582, and Father Aquaviva himself until February 1583; and during these years he had frequent direct contact with Akbar. It was seven years before a second mission was to visit the court in 1590, so that any influence detected in the work of the Mughal painters during the 1580s must have come through the first mission. Internal evidence reveals that two kinds of European pictorial art must have been available to them: engravings and illuminated manuscripts. The work of several German and Flemish engravers was known to them; Dürer and H.S. Beham, Maerten van Heemskerck and J. Sadeler, Wiericx and Pieter van der Heyden, are represented by originals or by close copies in the Mughal imperial albums. The earliest signed and dated copy is by Kesu, after an engraving by Heemskerck of St Matthew, in the Bodleian Library, dated 1587. Two other copies of Christian subjects by this artist signing Kesava Das are known. J. Sadeler's plate of St Jerome engraved in 1576 was copied by a lady, Nadira Banu, at an unknown date but in the correct colouring; while the figure of St John from Dürer's engraving of the *Crucifixion* of 1511 was copied with great skill by the young artist Abu'l Hasan in his thirteenth year in 1600. Dürer's *Virgin and Child* engraved in 1513 was copied by an anonymous hand in the Mughal court about the same date. This is now in the Royal Library at Windsor. All but the St John, which is only slightly tinted, are fully coloured in western taste, thus proving that the artists had access to western paintings or to advice from Europeans. In Jahangir's reign we know that the court artists were ordered to copy various originals, and that these included both oil paintings and illuminated manuscripts. In 1607 Father Jerome Xavier presented Jahangir with an illustrated copy of his Persian version of the Acts of the Apostles *(Dastan i-Ahwal i-Hawariyan)*.

Akbar's interest in western art is also undeniable, but we do not have such detailed information about it. In 1581 he was fascinated by a European organ, we learn from Bada'oni; and an organ is represented in one of the margin pictures of Jahangir's album leaves. In 1582 Akbar had European curtains hung in his palace; and these were probably tapestries. At Fathpur Sikri, in 1582 also, copies of pictures of Our Lord and the Virgin Mary in the Jesuits' oratory were made by Mughal painters; and in 1602 at Agra they copied a replica of the Madonna del Popolo, which Akbar caused to be carried into the palace for the purpose.

The third Jesuit mission conducted by Father Jerome Xavier, a nephew of St Francis Xavier, reached the court at Lahore in 1595, and he stayed on for twenty-two years. By 1608 Jahangir had had the walls and ceilings of various halls in his palace painted with subjects copied from the book mentioned above, in the colouring of which the fathers were consulted. By 1616 Jahangir had also examples of secular western painting, both Italian and English; Sir Thomas Roe, ambassador from King James I, gave him a miniature portrait by Isaac Oliver, the best English miniaturist of the period. The emperor had copies of this made by his painters and challenged Roe to distinguish them from the original.

If we turn again to Mughal painting of these twenty years from 1595 to 1615, we can find many instances of a thorough assimilation of western pictorial science. An outstanding example is the manuscript of the *Baharistan* of Jami in the Bodleian Library (Elliot 254) copied at Lahore in 1595 by Muhammad Husayn, called Zarin Qalam, for the imperial library. There are six miniatures and the margins are richly decorated with arabesques and cartouches containing figure subjects and hunting scenes. The miniatures are all signed, and eleven other artists signed the margin work, a unique instance in the


بضربات متعاقب و نقرات متوالی بنواخت

Baharistan of Jami: The Story of the Unfaithful Wife, painted by Miskina. Mughal School, dated 1595, Lahore. (9⅜ × 5⅝″) Elliot 254, folio 42 recto, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Akbar period. Among the miniatures two are outstanding, the *Dervish patching his Clothes* by Basawan, already mentioned, and the *Story of the Unfaithful Wife* by Miskina (folio 42a), here reproduced. Basawan is now master of perspective drawing and shows that he knows how to direct his lighting so as to give a plastic effect, and the quiet atmosphere suited to his subject. There is nothing exaggerated or forced about it. Miskina on the other hand had a dramatic story to illustrate. Habza, an unfaithful wife, had persuaded a young man to occupy her place in her tent while she enjoyed the company of a lover some distance away. Her husband has discovered the deception and is wreaking his wrath on the young man, while his wife's mother and sister are trying to protect him and soothe the husband. It is a night scene with moon and stars giving a thin and lurid light with harsh shadows, which have given the artist an opportunity of exhibiting his skill in chiaroscuro, according to Italian Mannerist prescription. The movement and gestures are violent and the lighting directed so as to enhance the sense of drama.

Illustration page 88

Miskina had been chosen to colour two of Daswanth's miniatures in the Jaipur *Razm-nama*. By the end of the reign of Akbar, when the Victoria and Albert Museum *Akbar-nama* was executed, he was one of the leading painters; and he is among those singled out in the *A'in i-Akbari* for special mention. He clearly enjoyed complex compositions with several centres of interest, as in two splendid double pages in the Victoria and Albert Museum; one representing the *Building of the Red Fort at Agra*; the other *An Imperial Hunt inside a Temporary Fence*, and with a temporary harem encampment in the centre. This provides one focal point in the big black eunuch seated at the entrance making an expressive gesture as he talks to a girl through the door; others in the two portraits of the emperor galloping, one on each leaf, a convenient way of narrative illustration; while the four corners are filled with the figures of animated beaters. No better example could be found of the circular composing of the late Akbar period, and of the impossibility of the margins containing all the vigorous action which they cut off. This picture is distinctly marred by the division of the colouring of the two halves between two hands, the right leaf by Sarwan being heavier than the left ascribed to Mansur. Although the *Building of the Red Fort* is also coloured by two different hands, they have managed to keep a single tone throughout.

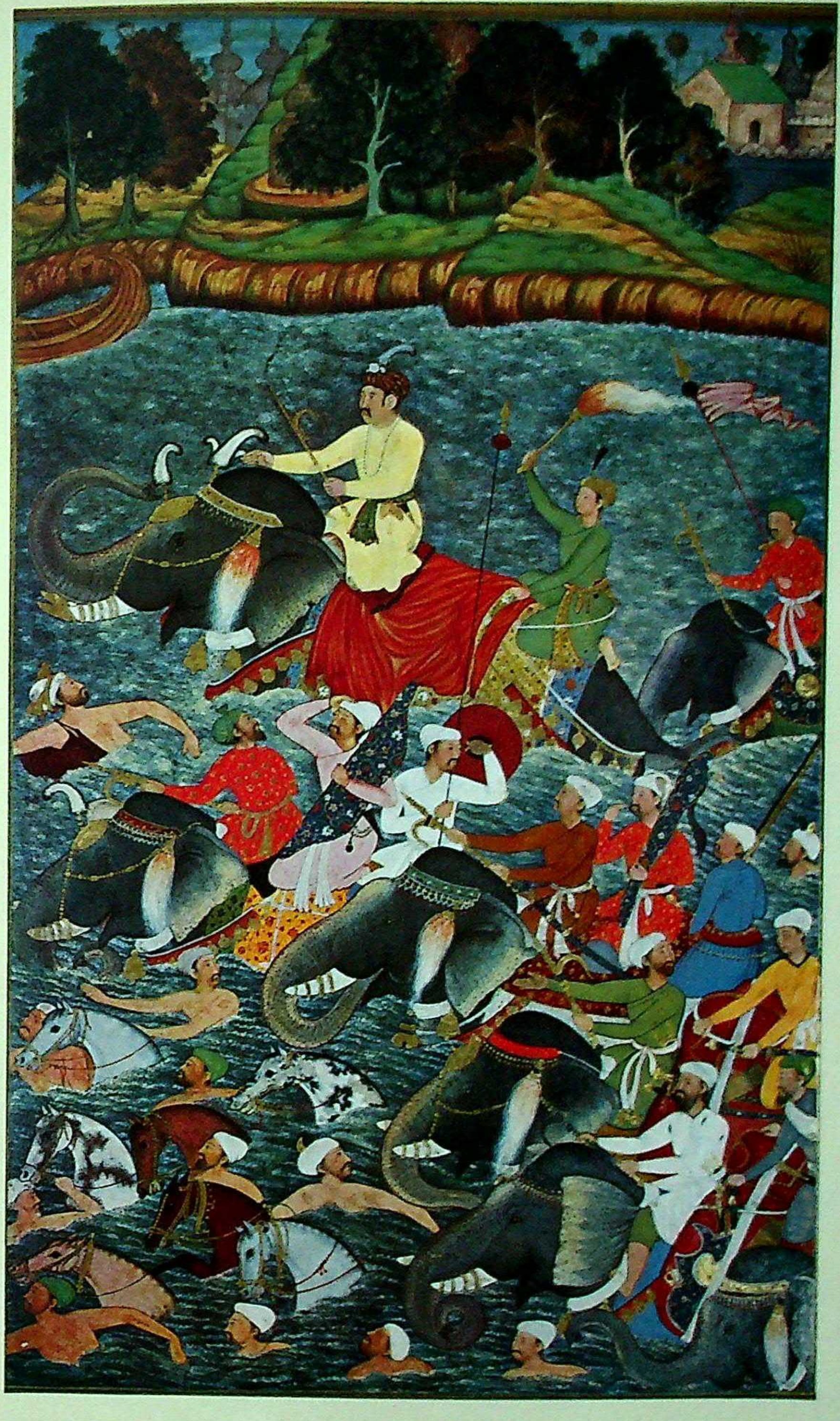
Miskina again shows his interest in architecture in the *Reception of the Ambassadors of Shah Rukh* in the same manuscript, in the careful perspective of the audience chamber. Here he had two assistants; so that the *Baharistan* miniature, which is his alone, gives a truer idea of his style and has been chosen for reproduction. In all his work the human figure is dominant, while he has a rare gift for atmosphere, unmatched at this time and more characteristic of the seventeenth century masters.

With Miskina the great series of historical manuscripts has been reached, which are the special glory of the late Akbar style. Probably the earliest of these is the *Tarikh i-Alfi*, a history of the world, written as annals, begun in 1582 at Akbar's command and intended to be finished by 1592 which was the year 1000 of the Muhammadan era, that commenced with the Flight of the Prophet in 622 A.D., and by lunar reckoning had completed thirty years more than the Julian calendar had accomplished. It is likely that the manuscript was never finished, for no copy of the work goes beyond 998 A.H. and certainly the text was still being revised two years after the "millennium" had been reached. In any case all the leaves now known from this imperial copy, which are few and widely scattered, illustrate the earlier centuries of Islamic history, and may be dated about 1590. In them the idea of the miniature as a background to the text is carried to an extreme; for it either surrounds the text on three sides, thus completely covering the exceptionally large page (41.5 by 22 cm.), or forms bars across the text, which is used to divide the composition into different sections illustrating separate events. The dying Caliph Harun al-Rashid lies across the text under the dome of his palace which fills the upper margin, while the right side shows his successor al-Ma'mun receiving the homage on his assumption of the Caliphate. Even more daring and successful is the device by which the text is made to appear to float in front of the miniature, which thus in conception occupies the whole of the page. This is managed, as in the scene in a mosque in which Amin, son of Harun, has the name of his son recited in public prayers before that of his brother Ma'mun, by allowing the edges of the text areas to cut into the composition regardless of their obscuring heads or bodies. The congregation is seated in three long rows, seen from the back, and thus markedly realistic, as is much in these miniatures. The compositions are all exceptionally clever and lucid; the architecture and landscape providing a coherent setting for the figures which dominate each page. The exceptionally tall shape of the page allows the sky, filled with stars or with snow-clouds, to give atmosphere to the whole scene. Pictorially these are among the most successful of Mughal miniatures; but, as a penalty, they lack feeling and movement. Western influence is stronger than in any of the other historical manuscripts, but shown rather in the realism of the figures than in chiaroscuro in the landscape.

Nearest to this manuscript in style is a copy of the section of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* by Rashid al-Din, a history of the line of Chingiz Khan, now preserved in the Gulistan Library in Tehran. This is dated 1004 A.H. and in the forty-first year of Akbar, which is equivalent to 1596; and the miniatures are attributed to the leading court painters Basawan, Lal, Bhim Gujarati, Dharm Das, Madhu and Sur Das Gujarati.

But most typical of the book is the work of Miskina, in two scenes of lamentation and dancing where the figures show western influence but the setting is purely Indian. This manuscript differs from the *Tarikh i-Alfi* in giving whole pages to miniatures without any text, as was to be the rule with many of the *Akbar-nama* miniatures of the last decade of the reign. In the *Jami al-Tawarikh* these are not the most successful compositions, the miniatures being crowded and agitated, sometimes to the point of incoherence. Perhaps partly because of the excessive division of the execution between as many as three hands, the figures are sometimes out of scale. But there are some charming and lively details. Some illustrations to the same work in the Pozzi Collection in Paris are closely related and no doubt executed by the same group of artists.

In equally strong colouring but with greater dramatic force are the illustrations to the Persian translation of the Memoirs of Babur, founder of the Mughal house, preserved in the British Museum (Or. 3714). This is undated but must be a work of the 1590s.



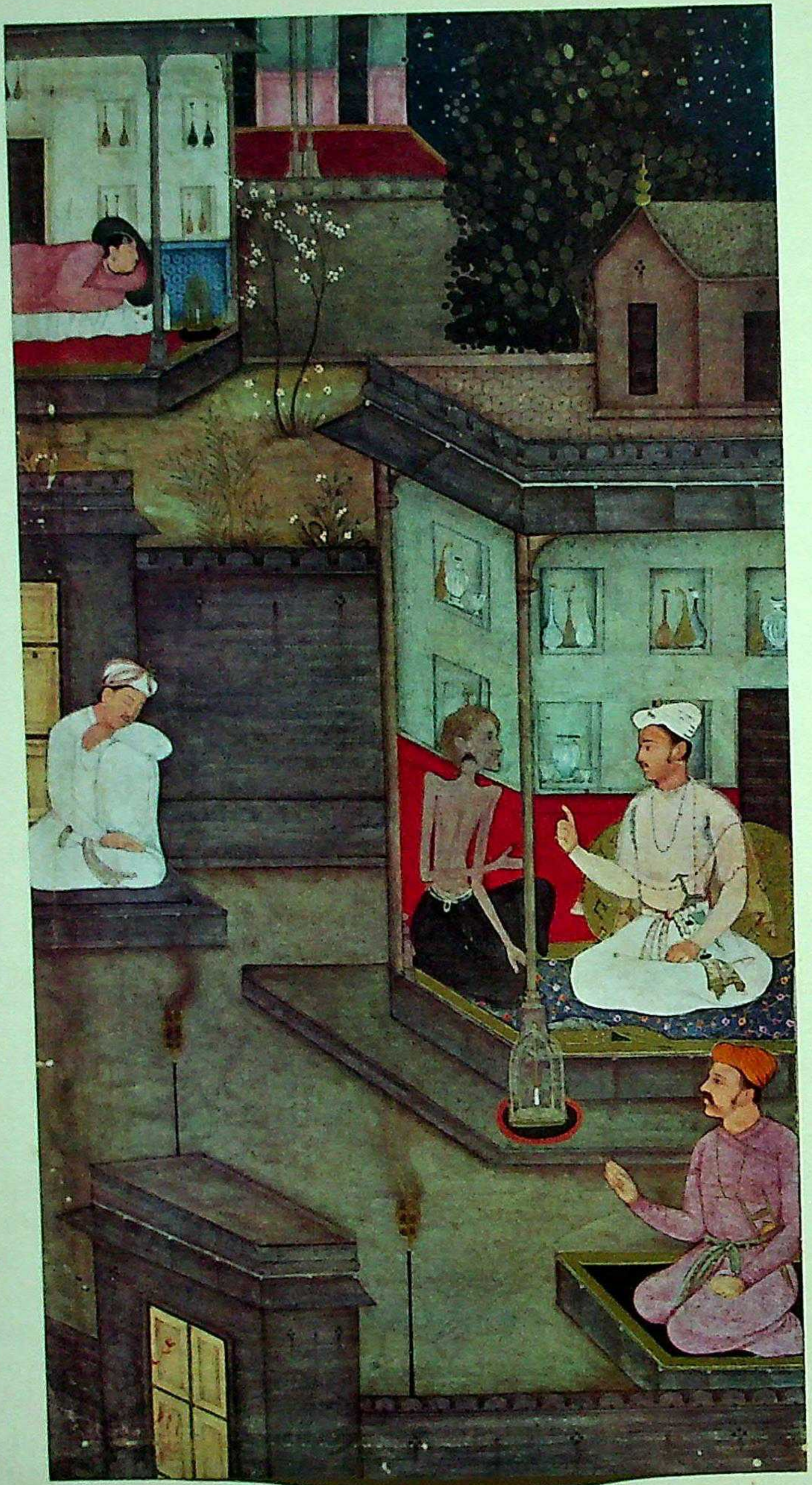
Akbar-nama: Akbar crossing the Ganges, painted by Ikhlas and Madhu. Mughal School, about 1600. (13⅛ × 7⅞")
1896-117-60, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The translation was finished in 1589, but none of the miniatures is probably earlier than 1595 and the latest may be of 1600. The sixty-eight miniatures are rather monotonous, perhaps inevitably, as they follow the descriptions of the battles and hunting parties; but drama and humour are within the compass of the painters. The animal drawings are outstanding, as in the rhinoceros hunt (a double-page composition), or the camels and mules of a caravan by Kanha (folio 196b), a strongly lit scene. There are also forty-eight pages of smaller drawings of individual animals and plants described in the Memoirs, among them the early work of Mansur, the great specialist in this genre in the next reign. Two other copies of the *Babur-nama* have survived from approximately this period. One, now in the National Museum of India but formerly in Agra College, is actually dated on one miniature 1597. The other is known from the sixty-nine miniatures on fifty-seven folios in the Museum of Oriental Cultures in Moscow, to which it passed from the Stchoukine Collection, representing probably all the miniatures cut from a lost manuscript. They appeared on the market at Nijni Novgorod in 1906 and do not belong to the same manuscript as some pages dispersed among many western collections, the largest group being seventeen acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1913. This last manuscript has been said by an American collector to be the earliest of all the illustrated *Babur-nama*, but they all appear to have been produced at the end of the century.

They may be the products of the atelier of the Khan i-Khanan Abd al-Rahim, who was himself responsible for the translation of the book into Persian. He is known to have maintained a scriptorium under the charge of his librarian Mawlana Ibrahim who was a man of many accomplishments; calligraphy, book-binding and miniature painting among them. He came from the Deccan and worked for some time with the Khan i-Khanan, but was then dismissed and disgraced. Unless he is the Ibrahim Kahar who worked on many Mughal manuscripts of the Akbar period, including both the British Museum and the Agra College *Babur-nama* manuscripts, his work is unknown. If he is, then it seems likely these manuscripts may derive from his library. Others who worked there include Madhu, who is said to have been a specialist in portraiture, and must therefore be equated with the Madhu who added the faces to several miniatures in the Victoria and Albert *Akbar-nama*. It may be that these men were trained in the Khan i-Khanan's employment and afterwards moved on to the imperial atelier.

Certainly in quality the miniatures of the *Babur-nama* manuscripts do not fall significantly below those in the contemporary imperial manuscripts. They are somewhat simpler but have on the whole rather more elaborate backgrounds. Western influence is less common, but none the less conspicuous in them, as for instance in a single blond figure introduced without intrinsic reason into a scene showing the Uzbeks attacking the envoys bringing gifts for Shah Mansur, in the Moscow manuscript. This immediately recalls a miniature, also by an unknown hand, illustrating a poem by Amir Khusrau Dihlavi, which is one of eight from a lost manuscript in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Others of these are by the court painters Basawan, Manohar, Dharm Das and Nar Singh, and they must have been painted in the imperial library between 1595 and 1600. They belong to the group of lyrical manuscripts rather than to the historical group but they also contain several isolated figures directly copied from some European source which stand out conspicuously among the normal Mughal figures. The mother demanding justice for her son who has been accidentally shot by a king while he was hunting, and this prostrate boy pierced by an arrow, are as mannered and un-Indian as the blond youth in the *Babur-nama* miniature at Moscow. It is not after all surprising that the Khan i-Khanan's painters should have been open to this fashionable influence to some extent. The Agra College manuscript of 1597 is not unlike the Moscow miniatures in general style, though the landscape settings are simpler; but what is remarkable is that there is so little repetition in these several series, so much invention, when the style is realistic and the action directly reported. There are forty-eight different painters named in the Agra College manuscript, but they do not include the leading painters of the day, Basawan, Lal or Daulat.

These tendencies were carried further in the *Akbar-nama* manuscript of the Victoria and Albert Museum (1896-117), undoubtedly the finest Mughal historical manuscript known to us, with its one hundred and seventeen miniatures illustrating the events of the earlier part of his reign. A good proportion of the miniatures are unbroken by any text; and where there is text, it is short and not in significant relation to the composition. Moreover the proportion of double-page miniatures occupying the full opening of the manuscript has much increased. The effect is that the miniatures have lost all close relation to the written text, which may be looked at as a move towards the Indian practice of separating text and illustration, or as due to the influence of the western concept of the framed picture. In any case it is a step away from the Persian practice. There are no longer margin paintings around a text, but rectangular pictures which never transgress the ruled margination. The horizon is always placed high; often beyond the upper margin, which thus cuts architecture or landscape in an apparently arbitrary way. A great many figures and other realistic details are often introduced, but the whole action is well controlled and the resulting composition is unified and often dramatic. Striking instances of a strong diagonal axis occur in two of the best-known pages, illustrating Akbar's attempt to control a wild elephant as it rushes onto a bridge of boats on the Jhelum, and the siege train before the castle of Ranthambor, hauled by oxen up the steep rocky hill. The first of these two double-page pictures is by Basawan, the second by Miskina, both of whom are rivalled in this manuscript only by three other painters, Lal, Kesu the Elder and Madhu the Elder, all of whom are not unexpectedly among those mentioned in the *A'in i-Akbari*, thus showing their reputation at the time. Lal integrates his action with the landscape setting better than most of the designers; in *Akbar's Entry into Ranthambor* in 1568 (No. 76) the procession makes an S-curve up the hill from the imperial camp at the foot to the walled city on the summit; or, in the smiling and spacious landscape of the *Capture of Da'ud Shah, King of Bengal* in 1576, which is already in the lighter palette of the Jahangir period. There was indeed some return to the Persian treatment of rocks at this time, as may be seen in another work by Lal, showing Akbar hunting deer with a trained leopard in 1568. But even here the foreground is more important and the detail more realistic than in Persian painting.



Jog Vashisht: A Female Demon interviews a King at Night in the Himalayas (folio 73 recto).
Mughal School, dated 1602. (8⅝ × 4⅝″) Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.

The outstanding characteristic of the illustrations to this manuscript as a whole, however, is the realism and what one might call "straight reporting." It celebrates the doings of the emperor and is always inclined to stress his personal drive and energy. Consequently such a subject as *Akbar swimming his Elephant across the Ganges* in 1567 may be regarded as most typical. The composition is by Ikhlas, an artist unknown outside this manuscript, and the portraits by Madhu, who has been mentioned as a specialist of repute in this line. The emperor dominates the scene and emphasizes by his gesture the movement to the left across the river. A lance held by a courtier in the centre provides the only vertical line, while the echelon formed by the elephants' heads makes the inclined axis, which is so frequent in these pages. The frame cuts off the scene where it makes a balanced composition, but it seems like a section from a wall painting which clearly continues to right and left. If these book illustrations are enlarged by projection of a screen it is at once apparent how close they are to the great tradition of Indian wall-painting, an art in which the human figure always dominated. The decorative wall-painting, in the palace of Fathpur Sikri, remains of which can still be distinguished are less close to this old tradition, which by 1600 had made a definite contribution to the now mature Mughal style. A number of painters from Gwalior and Gujarat had joined the library staff.

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There is only one other big series of *Akbar-nama* illustrations, the sixty-one in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, covering much the same period as those in the Victoria and Albert Museum and ending in 1580 with the arrival of the first Jesuit mission at the Mughal court. There are also twelve miniatures in a fragmentary manuscript in the Gulistan Library in Tehran (size 24 by 15 cm.) with ascriptions to Shankar, Bhim and Basawan, only the first of whom is represented in the Beatty manuscript, which on the other hand includes work by Daulat, Govardhan, Inayat and Pidarath, whose main activity at least was in the Jahangir period. Indeed it seems likely that this manuscript is decidedly later than the Victoria and Albert copy, and was not begun until about 1605. The compositions are quieter and the colouring cooler and in a different palette, avoiding the strong reds of the Akbar period historical manuscripts. The point of vision is lower and there is no difficulty in keeping the miniatures within the margins. The text never impinges on the field of the miniature, but where there is any it is relegated to the top or bottom of the page. One feels that the directing hand of Akbar has been removed and the tension, so characteristic of the earlier historical manuscripts, even when only reporting, has been relaxed. The building of Fathpur Sikri depicted by Balchand is a far quieter and less dramatic scene than the illustration of the *Construction of the Red Fort at Agra* by Miskina in the Victoria and Albert Museum, with its crowded scene and repeated diagonal of the inclined planes, up which the masons and bricklayers are carrying their materials. Balchand has distributed his workers about the interior of the palace courtyard which is receiving its last touches. The prospect of the siege of Kabul, a double page by Shankar, is conceived in the spirit of romance; whereas the sieges of Chitor and Ranthambor, as envisaged by Miskina again, are real battle-pieces with all the smoke and confusion of warfare. Akbar certainly took some of his painters on his campaigns, which may partly account for the vigour of the reporting. The virtues of the *Akbar-nama* manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library are different and connected rather with another tradition established in the late Akbar period.

A manuscript undoubtedly made for the Khan i-Khanan is a version of the *Ramayana* now in the Freer Gallery, Washington, completed in 1598-1599. Of the one hundred and thirty miniatures now to be found in the manuscript, fifty carry the names of twelve different painters recorded below them, none of whom is known to have worked for the imperial library; but, no doubt, it was copied after Akbar's original, which would presumably have been finished soon after the completion of the translation of the great epic into Persian in 1591. This is lost, and we can only conjecture whether it showed the lyrical feeling so conspicuous in the Freer Gallery pictures. In our present state of knowledge they are the earliest examples of a type of naturalism found in a small group of illustrated manuscripts, mainly Hindu, but including also one work of the Persian poet Jami. In them we meet most strongly expressed one of the special qualities of Mughal painting: its infusion into the treatment of natural scenes of a spirit of intimacy and wonder. The animals have a buoyancy and the plants a grace and abundance; and the human figures an absorption with unmundane things which is in complete contrast to the historical works which we have been considering or to the realism of the miniatures under strongest western influence. There is no doubt that this vision of the world as an illusion required the use of more transparent colours in these manuscripts.

Outstanding among them is the *Jog Vashisht* dated 1602 in the Chester Beatty Library which is undoubtedly the work of the imperial atelier, although hardly any of the names of the artists now remain. The landscape is of the same type as in the Freer *Ramayana*, but naturally more advanced in the treatment of the whole setting, for things were still moving fast in the development of the school. The countryside now includes much detail not directly connected with the scene illustrated, but equally not mere conventional distance, as in the Oxford *Baharistan* of 1595. The interiors show the actual way of life in India of different classes of people. But the whole is informed by an atmosphere appropriate to an account of Vedanta, the attainment of enlightenment without any physical separation from the world. In the page illustrated a demon in woman's shape is talking with a king in his palace at night, one of the many stories in the book which include supernatural actors. The architectural setting is old-fashioned and simple, but the scene is charged with the murky light in which the figures appear partly luminous, but without any of the weight which qualifies them in the *Baharistan* of 1595.

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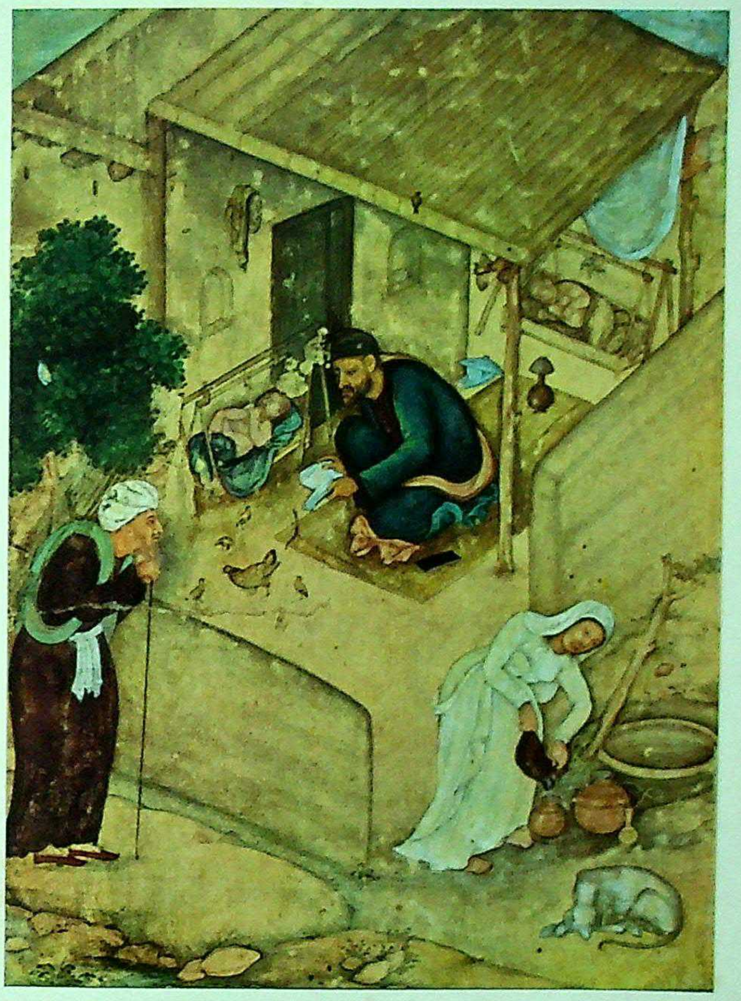
Much the same spirit informs a copy of the long prose work by Jami called *Nafahat al-Uns* (literally "Breaths of Fellowship"), containing biographies of Persian mystical saints known as Sufis, which was copied for Akbar in the following year, 1603, at Agra. It was once illustrated by thirty miniatures, but of these only seventeen remained in the manuscript when it entered the British Museum collection as Or. 1362. They are mostly in much lighter colouring, several being no more than tinted drawings; but all nearly the full size of the page, about ten by six inches. One, signed Daulat, shows the strong colour and western influence so conspicuous in the 1595 *Baharistan*, but more typical is



Nafahat al-Uns: Poet and Dervish in Domestic Scene, detail.
Mughal School, dated 1603, Agra. (Page, 7¼ ×4⅛″)
Or. 1362, folio 142 recto, British Museum, London.

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folio 142a which has the new lighter colouring for the background, while keeping the traditional aerial perspective, with the figures fully coloured and with plastic drapery. The subject is the vision of Abu'l Husayn Karafi, foreseeing the future married bliss of another Sufi, Abu Bakr Duqqi, and the whole scene is naturalistic. A hen and chicks, a dog, pigeons on the roof, and a hawk hovering, are all beautifully observed and set down with feeling. The two babies in their slung cots and the woman getting water from a well complete the quiet scene in which the relation of the figures is psychological rather than actual. A new stage has been reached in the development of Mughal painting; this is confirmed by the examination of a manuscript of the following year, 1604, also in the Chester Beatty Library, the *Raj Kanvar*, a romance copied at Allahabad. Here the landscape is more open, and painted in a quieter tone than the earlier Akbari manuscripts; and the sky is softer, while the free flight of birds, instead of the formalized groups usual in Mughal miniatures, increases the naturalistic effect.

One more manuscript may be mentioned here because it was also copied at Allahabad, a volume of verse by Amir Najir al-Din Hasan of Delhi, dated 1602-1603, now in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore. This again shows a spacious and natural landscape while the dresses combine in a harmony of various colours. This is in fact the special characteristic of early Jahangiri painting, and it has been remarked that in these years Allahabad was the official residence of the future emperor, then known as Prince Salim. It is quite certain that at this time he had his own painters attached to his staff, but it would be rash to assume that it was he who personally brought about this minor stylistic revolution; for the *Nafahat al-Uns* was illuminated in the imperial atelier at Agra, yet it too shows the new palette. In other words this change came just before the end of the reign of Akbar and does not coincide exactly with the accession of Jahangir in 1605. But while prince he had already gathered round him some of the best painters and was ready to propagate this new style.

It is therefore natural that the best miniatures of the early Jahangiri manuscripts follow straight on from the work which we have been discussing. The earliest of these are either derived from an animal fable book called *Iyar i-Danish*, the miniatures of which are now divided between the Cowasji Jahangir Collection in Bombay and the Chester Beatty Library; or still preserved in the *Anwar i-Suhayli*, another fable book in the British Museum (Add. 18579). These both have some miniatures dated 1605, but were probably in progress during the next five years, for 1610 is the date in the colophon of the latter manuscript; while that of the former has not yet come to light. It may well not be an imperial manuscript, for it has the unsophistication of a provincial work especially in the figure drawing; but there is some connection with the *Nafahat al-Uns* in the small scale of the action and the observation shown in the animal drawing, and the colouring is in the same low key.

Far more important as an index to the style of the new reign is the *Anwar i-Suhayli* with its signed work by Aqa Riza and Abu'l Hasan, Bishn Das and Madhu and Anant. Aqa Riza seems to have worked all his life for Jahangir, first when he was prince and afterwards as emperor. Since his son Abu'l Hasan was a Khanazad, that is, born in the imperial palace, Aqa Riza must have been already established at the court by 1589, the year of his birth. At this time Prince Salim was twenty and in a position to attract to his service a promising young painter from Persia. Aqa Riza had evidently been trained in the Safavi court style of the 1580s, as is shown by his miniature of the *Feast of the King of Yemen* in Add. 18579, with its blue wall painting of animals in landscape depicted behind the king's throne and the elegant figures of the court pages. In landscape he made much use of the richly tinted piled-up rock forms found in the drawings by Muhammadi, a native of Herat. Jahangir in his Memoirs, under date 1617 when writing of the perfection of style achieved by Abu'l Hasan, mentions that his father "Aqa Riza of Herat" joined his service when he was prince. In the same place Jahangir boasts that "his own liking for painting and practice in judging it had arrived at such a point that when any work is brought before me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such a man" and so on.

An early work by Aqa Riza, in pure Safavi style of about 1580, is preserved in the Gulistan Library, Tehran. It is signed "the work of Riza'i the disciple of Padishah Salim"; Schroeder has suggested that Aqa Riza was a direct pupil of Muhammadi, and this is plausible. The miniatures by him in the *Anwar i-Suhayli* show the greater realism in face and gesture of Mughal painting, but he and his son brought a considerable strengthening to the Persian element in the Mughal school, particularly in the calligraphic quality of the draughtsmanship; and also in the more jewel-like colouring. Nevertheless, as we shall see, Abu'l Hasan developed as an outstanding portraitist, quite outside the range of any Persian miniaturist.

Some miniatures which must date from the early years of Jahangir's reign were evidently added about this time to two earlier manuscripts, both of which have already been mentioned, the *Gulistan* of 1567 in the British Museum (Or. 5302) and a *Diwan* of Hafiz in the same collection (Or. 7573). The first fill seven large pages of this manuscript with spacious landscapes in the late Akbari manner, with some trace still of western elements, both in distant buildings and in drapery; while the colouring is in the new palette. The draughtsmanship of the figures is as good as anything in the Add. 18579. In the Hafiz, which is a tiny volume to keep in the sleeve, are eight whole-page miniatures (size about 10 by 6 cm.), in three of which Jahangir himself is represented, hunting, playing polo, and receiving pearls from his son Prince Khurram, while the others show subjects more appropriate to the symbolism of these poems. On four of them there is a great increase of atmosphere; *A Wine-seller in the Open Air* and *A Gathering of Sages by a Water-tank* resemble the *Nafahat al-Uns* miniatures in their domesticity and naturalism. *The Young Man entering a Feast in a Garden* also excels in naturalism, while here the more distant prospect increases the atmosphere of idyllic peace. Undoubtedly the most remarkable of the miniatures in this little book is the *Dervishes dancing.* The abandon with which the two elderly dervishes are turning is implied by their turbans fallen to the ground. A third old man sings as he plays on the guitar to the accompaniment of a tambourine. Behind, a bearded man has flung his arms round the shoulders of a youth seated close beside him. The atmosphere of ecstasy is so strong that one is not

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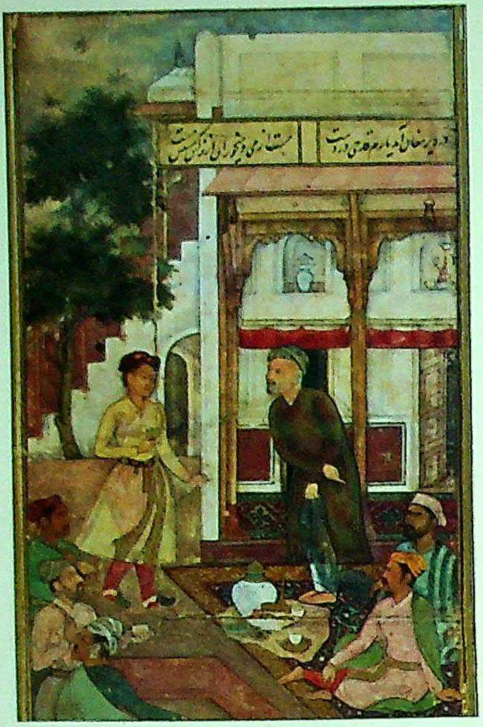


Diwan of Hafiz: A Young Man entering a Feast.
Mughal School, about 1610. (4 ×2½″) Or. 7573, folio 42 recto,
British Museum, London.

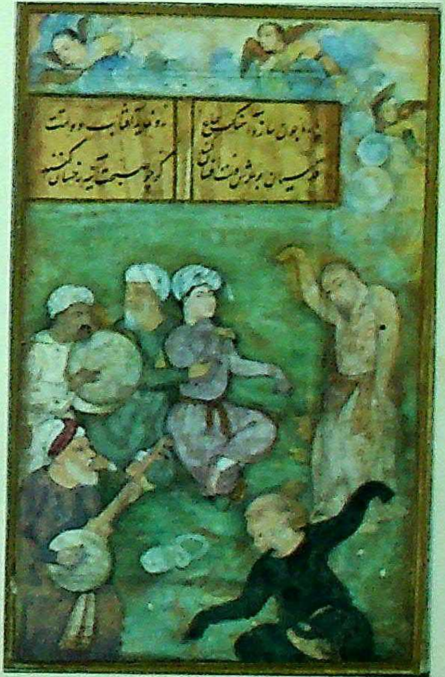
surprised to see blue cherubs gazing down from the clouds above them. They have a clearly western look and must derive from the example of some Christian engraving. One of the other miniatures shows Jahangir riding with a hawk on his wrist and an angel grasping his stirrup.

The pictures must be appreciated against the background of the poems which they illustrate. The youth entering the feast bears a wine flask; and we remember the lines, "Mirth, spring, to linger in a garden fair, what more has earth to give? All ye that wait, where is the Cup-bearer?" and "From the monastery to the wine-tavern door the way is naught." "All ye that misconstrue my words' intent; I lie on the bricks of the tavern floor and a brick shall serve me for an argument." Jahangir was fond of taking auguries from the *Diwan* of Hafiz, and a manuscript which he used for this purpose is still preserved at Patna. He had also, as Dr Ettinghausen has recently pointed out in a most interesting study, a particular affection for dervishes and for the life of the Sufi and a personal devotion to Mu'in al-Din Chishti. It is well at this point to consider the influence of the emperor's character and tastes on Mughal painting; for they were as great as those of his father, although very different.

The work of the imperial library under Akbar reflects his sense of history, of the destiny of his house, and his pride in his ancestry; and on the other hand, his sense of mission as the appointed ruler of many millions, in whom he must nourish mutual trust and understanding. He saw the need for the Persian and Turkish administrators of his empire to appreciate and accept the basic concepts of the Hindus who formed the majority of his subjects. It was explicitly for this reason that he had the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* translated into Persian, and works on Vedanta and Yoga written and copies circulated among his courtiers. He was bound also to emphasize the transcendent position of his throne and the divine sanction of his personal position.

Jahangir was a very different man; a man of sensibility and taste, proud of his artistic gifts and judgment; finding an outlet for his feelings in the commissioned work of his painters. He strengthened his self-confidence by having himself depicted as a world ruler and judge, king of kings; and reflecting in his person the glory of his first name Jahangir (earth-seizer) and the splendour of his second name Nur al-Din (light of religion). His favourite painter Abu'l Hasan depicts him holding the orb of terrestrial power, or standing on the lion of majesty above the globe and in front of a great disk of the sun; or holding the scales of justice or the chain of equity to the suppliant. He is seen symbolically embracing one enemy, the Shah of Persia, or transfixing another, the great Abyssinian general of the Deccani kingdom of Ahmadnagar, with an arrow.

Perhaps nowhere in pictorial terms is Jahangir's personal taste and artistic policy more clearly seen than in the composition and arrangement of the albums in which he mounted his personal collection of paintings and calligraphy. From internal evidence these were begun soon after his accession and continued until about 1618. The collection naturally includes works of earlier dates, and even a small number of first-class Persian drawings going back to the last quarter of the fifteenth century. But a number of the portraits are contemporary and all were specially mounted to a common size (40 by 24 cm.) so as to form a series of albums *(muraqqa)* of uniform format. Each folio has mounted on one side a painting, or occasionally several of smaller size; and on the other, one or more specimens of calligraphy, which was valued at least as highly as pictorial art in the Islamic east. The leaves were so arranged that at each opening of the album two pages of calligraphy or two of drawings were exposed. The margins of every leaf were sumptuously decorated in gold with arabesques or flowers and animals. The pictorial openings never have in addition more than coloured birds among the arabesques; but the calligraphy is surrounded by figures in light colours introduced among the floral patterns. They illustrate hunting, various crafts and occupations, including the arts of the book and music, and include portraits of a number of calligraphers and painters engaged in their activities; and even of the emperors and their courtiers. Occasionally these little vignettes are enclosed in cartouches, but generally they are freely distributed among the gold-painted landscapes. This sumptuous margin-painting is based upon Persian example which goes back to the beginning of the Timurid period about 1400. The practice began with narrow margin-painting of floral design in gold and light colours, triangular thumb-sketches being introduced occasionally, as throughout the *Anthology of Iskandar Sultan* in the Gulbenkian Foundation, which is dated 1410. Under the Safavi this margin-painting developed into wide decorative designs including natural and mythical animals and birds. By the 1570s at the latest these were carried out in two or three different shades of gold with touches of silver for streams and waterfalls; the animals play among the plants, while the whole is orientated for the first time as a single composition.

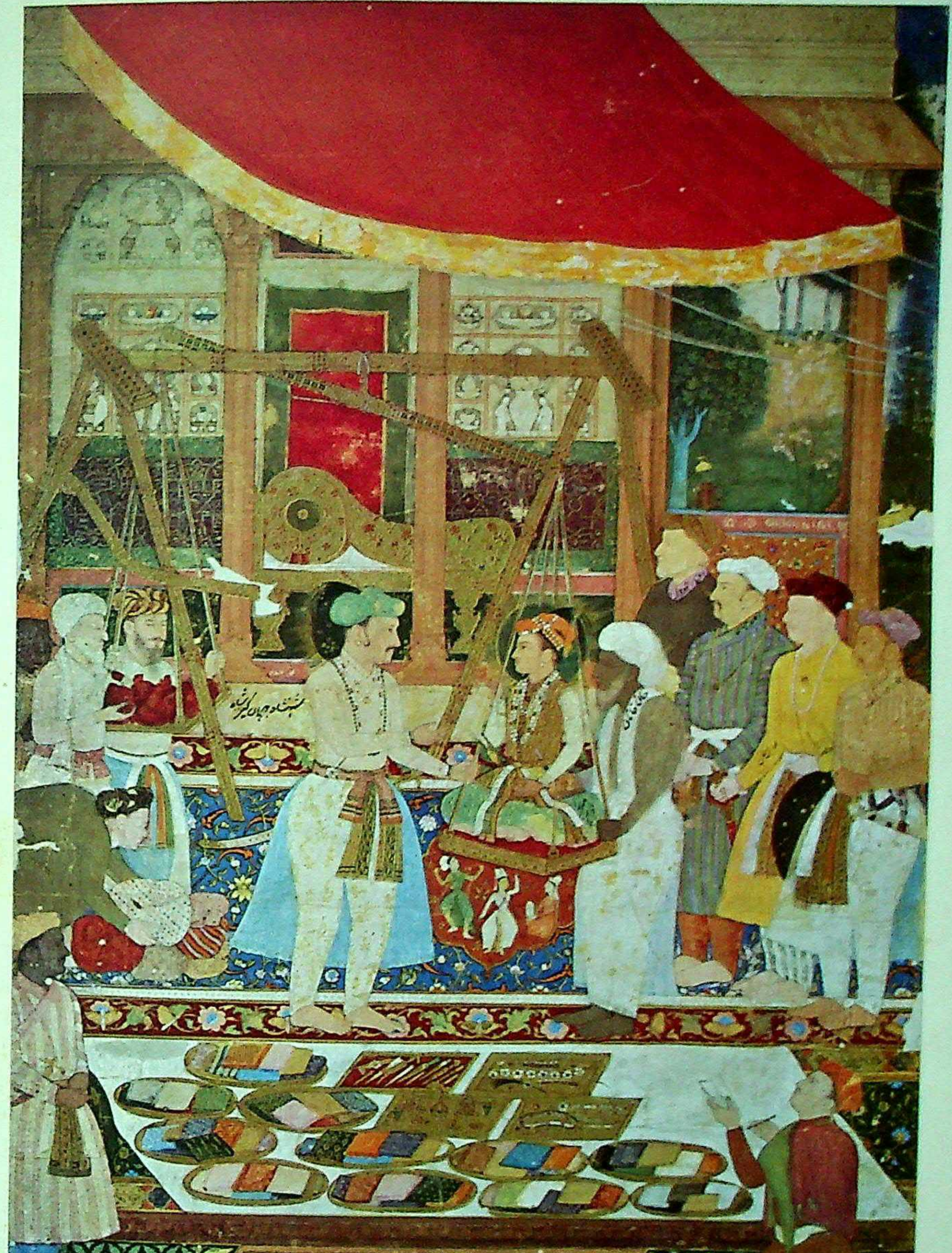


Diwan of Hafiz: Dervishes Dancing. Mughal School, about 1610. (3⅜ × 2⅜") Or. 7573, folio 66 verso, British Museum, London.

Consequently the Mughal artists were only developing still further an idea already extensively worked out by the Persians. By 1595 they had taken the additional step of introducing human figures into this kind of margin-painting and of tinting them in natural colours. Examples can be seen in the *Baharistan* of that year in the Bodleian Library, the margins of which are signed by leading court artists of the period, such as Mukhlis, Khim, and Balchand, who are not the same as those responsible for the miniatures in this manuscript, which have already been described. This work was thus not entirely the production of specialists, and apparently did not become so under Jahangir, who was in this not so much an innovator as a systematizer. The arabesques now are more tightly designed, while the variety of other subjects is increased to include even figures copied from western engravings. One of these albums survives in the Gulistan Library, Tehran, on the margins of some of whose leaves Daulat, one of the best artists of the period, has portrayed four of his leading colleagues, Abu'l Hasan, Manohar, Bishn Das and Govardhan, as well as including his own self-portrait. Govardhan too is found signing some of the margin-paintings in Jahangir's albums, and Balchand also continued the kind of work that he had done in the margins of the *Baharistan*. These folios are now scattered about the world, the largest number after Tehran being twenty-five in the National Library in Berlin; others are in the Musée Guimet in Paris and the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.

Although a number of genre scenes of different date are included in these album leaves, the latest dated 1618 being in the most Persian of the Mughal styles of this time, the majority of the paintings are portraits, generally of single figures on a monochrome ground. Here again it is probable that Jahangir was a perfector more than an innovator, for Abu'l Fazl has recorded that Akbar had started to form a collection of portraits of the leading men of his time; but it is not possible to assign any existing portraits with complete confidence to his reign. Of the earlier looking portraits in the Jahangir albums, several are represented standing or seated in front of buildings or in interiors, and this may be a fashion of the Akbar period, in contrast to the later styles. The typical Jahangiri portrait is a full-length standing figure in either profile or three-quarter face against a turquoise blue or dark green ground. These portraits appear to have been much copied both at the time and later and it is now not always easy to discriminate between these copies and the originals, and a great deal of detailed study is required before it can be agreed which are the authentic court portraits of the first half of the seventeenth century. Early in the century if any background landscape is indicated it seems to have been limited to a flowering tree or plants with a bird perhaps in flight, as in the portrait by Mansur of a musician playing the *vina* in Mr Croft Murray's collection, or the fanciful portrait of the emperor Babur in the British Museum. This is still half within the Persian idiom, but more extravert, conscious, that is, of the spectator. Later in Jahangir's reign portraiture becomes less distinct from genre painting.

The group portrait was a genre much favoured under Jahangir, probably developed as illustrative material for the emperor's Memoirs. The best known of these groups are the full public *durbar* of 1619 in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts by Abu'l Hasan; the



Jahangir weighing Prince Khurram. Mughal School, about 1615. (10⅜ × 8")
1948-10-9-069, British Museum, London.

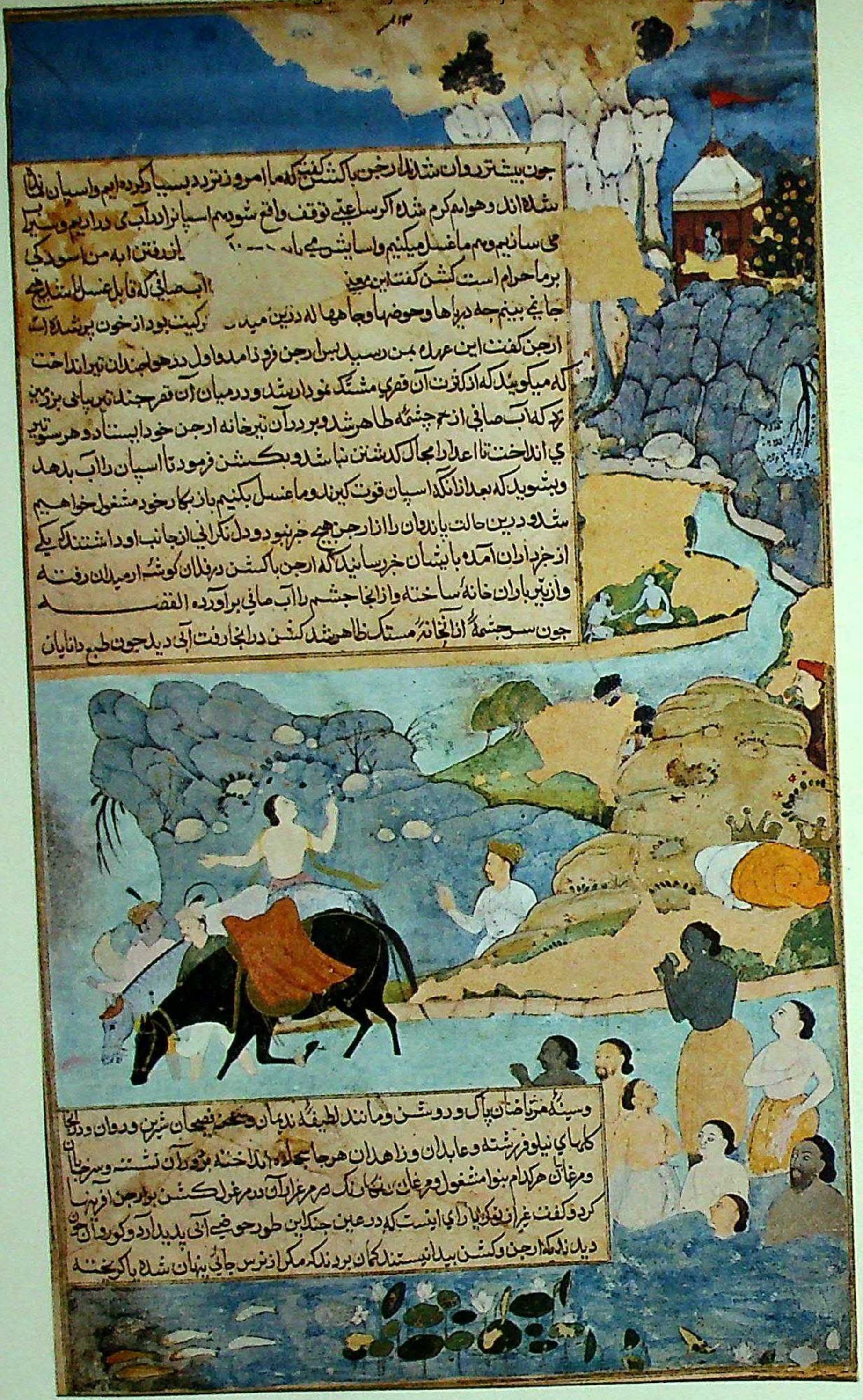
private audience of about 1610 in the Victoria and Albert Museum (I.M. 9. 1925); and the even more restricted family group, but still a formal reception, by Manohar, of which there are two versions of equal quality in the British Museum and the Hermitage. The large group is a mosaic of separate portraits skilfully assembled and of great historical importance; but for all the quality of the draughtsmanship, not a satisfactory work of art. The smaller groups reveal more of the sumptuous detail of court life and of the formality and tension within the imperial family, which in each generation led to revolt and estrangement between the emperor and his sons.

Jahangir's Memoirs survive to record his interests from day to day, and throw clear light on his character and tastes. He mentions that he had commissioned Abu'l Hasan to paint a frontispiece illustrating his accession, and no doubt they were intended to be fully illustrated and to include all those portraits of rare animals, unusual trees and flowers which he ordered Mansur and other painters to record. Finished drawings of animals with signatures of Mansur, Pidarath and Inayat survive in the Victoria and Albert Museum and elsewhere, and show the height of the accomplishment reached by these artists. Whether for observation or for sympathetic treatment it would be hard to find anything to surpass the best of this work. There are also one or two animal pictures where something more than portraiture has been attempted, of which the two finest are the *Chameleon* in the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle by Mansur and the *Squirrels in a Chenar Tree* attributed to Abu'l Hasan in the India Office Library, London. Here we no longer have a careful study of a specimen, evidently sometimes drawn after the death of the animal, but an insight into the character of the creature as it lives its free life in its natural habitat. Between the two kinds is a picture of an elephant being fed by its keeper, in the British Museum; in this the unknown artist has at least shown a deep respect for the noble beast even though it is domesticated. Apart from these animal paintings only scattered paintings and sketches survive from all this material, and it may never have been put together in volume form. A few of these depict hunting scenes or processions comparable with the *Akbar-nama* illustrations; and these reveal the increased naturalism and reduced energy of the new reign. Others show the emperor surrounded by his ladies or examining the work of his artists while cats frolic around. An annual event was the weighing against gold of the imperial princes, often mentioned in the Memoirs. This is an occasion between the formal public audience and the private occasions just mentioned. This illustration therefore shows both the sumptuous court life and also the personal preoccupation of the emperor himself, as he balances in the scales his son Prince Khurram against the money bags. He stands barefoot on the carpet, in the central cartouche of which there is a design of dancing girls. Presents for the birthday are laid out on trays in the foreground; on the back wall of the pavilion, in which the royal throne is standing, is a collection of porcelain and glass arranged in many niches, a fashion which was to spread to Europe from Persia and India in the latter part of this century. The setting thus testifies to Jahangir's taste as a collector. He was also a lover of nature; and beyond the buildings on the right there is a glimpse of a garden, in an atmosphere kinder than the hard light of the court scene. A formal title above the

Illustration page 103

picture suggests that it was actually one of the pages intended for the illustrated Memoirs. Khurram, the future Shah Jahan, appears in this picture to be not more than sixteen, an age which he reached in 1607; but the emperor wears pearl earrings, a fashion which he apparently started only in 1614, when he records that he had his ears pierced. It is therefore possible that the drawing may not be contemporary with the event depicted. It can hardly be later than 1615 however on stylistic grounds.

The last ten years of Jahangir's reign saw a change in the miniature style, an increase in symbolic and genre painting. The emperor on his throne is raised to a superhuman level and his head is surrounded by a halo. He is withdrawn and even his thoughts are above mortal understanding. Two Apotheosis scenes of this sort in the Freer Gallery of Art have lately been published by Dr Ettinghausen with his reasons for dating them to the years of the emperor's decline in health and competence, between 1620 and 1625. In the same period subjects like the visit of Jahangir to an ascetic are treated, not as reporting as they had been under Akbar, but introspectively or idealistically. The emperor or one of the princes is represented in the company of religious teachers, remote from the waiting courtiers, as in a drawing in the Musée Guimet. At the end of the reign too scenes of religious discussion or instruction begin to appear, in which there is no figure from the Mughal court; and these are signed by court artists like Manohar or Govardhan. A third type, equally romantic in tone, begins in these years, the picture of the emperor in the zenana, and even occasionally in a love scene. The brilliant lighting and hard outline of the early years of the reign give place to softer, diffused light and a lighter touch in the genre scenes; or to theatrically contrived lighting in the symbolic pictures. It is precisely in these visionary portraits that the emperor appears in a blaze of light which floods upon him from all sides so that the effect is to flatten his figure. The reign ends with this fresh influence from Western Baroque painting whose propaganda value was evidently appreciated at the Mughal court.



Razm-nama: Krishna and the Pandavas watering their Horses. Provincial Mughal Style, dated 1616. (14⅜ × 8½″)
1958-7-12-019, British Museum, London.

THE PROVINCIAL MUGHAL STYLE

Throughout the reign of Akbar, the Mughal school was drawing upon the resources of the various regional centres of painting, which were flourishing in different parts of India. It would have been impossible to build up so quickly a staff of court painters with the strength, fecundity and variety of the Mughal school in the sixteenth century if there had not been an active tradition of manuscript illumination in India before the Mughal period. This situation has been described in an earlier chapter. Now we are concerned with the opposite tendency, for influence to extend from the Mughal court to provincial centres. Of such influence there is no sign before 1600. It took time for the prestige of Mughal power to pave the way for the acceptance by local centres of the naturalistic style of Mughal painting. An index of the resistance to this new way of seeing can be seen in the stylistic history of painting in Mewar, where the Mughal spatial concept was not admitted until about 1610, when political isolation was also abandoned by the Maharaja.

The Mughal court style became widely known through the policy of the emperor. In the first place the court in these years frequently moved from one place to another, and it was the practice for the painters to accompany the emperor on warlike missions and in the enjoyment of the beauties of the scenery of Kashmir or the pleasures of the chase. We have already noted that the principal courtiers might themselves patronize painters and keep an atelier at work; and that Akbar had encouraged his nobles to commission copies of the works he had translated into Persian out of Sanskrit or Hindi. The illustrations to these were less accomplished and less highly finished and with less sumptuous colours, but they were still Mughal paintings. When however these Mughal administrators were in places far from the court, they had to rely on such painters as they could recruit locally to illustrate their manuscripts. The illumination of this sort of manuscript was not until recently considered by collectors and students as deserving of their attention and it is only now beginning to be studied and appreciated. Pages from a dispersed manuscript of the *Razm-nama*, many of them signed by two painters Abdullah and Fazl, not otherwise known, show what a broader treatment of these subjects might achieve. One of the miniatures is dated 1616. Although they are old-fashioned for this date, occupying the whole margin of the pages, just as in the original manuscript in Jaipur, the planes have been simplified and all recession denied. Areas of flat colour give greater cohesion and unity to the design, and the pure colours correspond to the Indian pictorial sense. The drawing of animals and birds is more lively and in general the abandonment of literal illusion has benefited the design, even if it must be granted that the line is coarse and clumsy. The most important result was that the gulf which had opened between Mughal and other Indian painting is here nearly bridged.

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It is consequently not a long step further to some other illustrations of wholly Indian themes and with text in the vernacular. Such are the series of pages in the upright Persian shape but never bound into a codex, with text of the *Rasikapriya*, a verse treatise on rhetoric in Hindi by Kesava Das of Orchha in Bundelkhand. Below the text on both sides of each leaf is a painting, generally but not always of greater width than height, thus conforming to the old Hindu shape of the page. These drawings also, as Coomaraswamy perceived long ago, are in a vernacular Mughal style. The colouring is that of the Jahangiri palette but simplified by the omission of half-tones. In many of the forty-four miniatures the figures of the lovers and of the heroine and her confidante are placed beneath a bracketed arcade which serves as a kind of frame. This device may go back to pre-Mughal Islamic painting in Northern India, evidence for which is provided by the John Rylands *Laur Chanda* manuscript. The date of the *Rasikapriya* miniatures must be after 1591 when the work was composed; and if the argument is correct, not before or much after 1610-1615.

The hero, here represented by Krishna, generally wears the muslin *jama* with five or six points, which seems to have gone out of fashion after that date. The glass and blue and white porcelain in niches exactly correspond to Mughal examples, and the *pagri* is of the shape worn under Jahangir. In the miniature illustrated all these characteristics are shown; the confidante (on the left) addresses her mistress the heroine (Radha): "All men consider the lord of a wife to be her very god—He dwells like an image reflected in thee as if in a mirror—Hearken, my Queen, is there any point in which he does not obey?" (Coomaraswamy's translation rearranged). The flounce of the bed still shows the modelling of Mughal painting. Coomaraswamy suggested that the set might have been made for Raja Birbal, Akbar's Hindu laureate; and this is the kind of patron who must have commissioned it. The locale would be somewhere in northern India within the Mughal dominions and probably not far from Dehli.

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A third series of eighteen miniatures stand in the same kind of relation to Mughal painting. They illustrate the Hindu theme of the *Ragamala* or personification of the musical modes. The titles are in Persian and they lack the verse descriptions which usually accompany such pictures. Architecture and colouring are not unlike those of the *Rasikapriya* series, but there is a rather insistent purple introduced which is a more Mughal tint. Only two show any landscape and they reflect Jahangiri prototypes; while all include the conventional flight of birds so common in Mughal painting of the early seventeeth century. The girls' dress is in the tradition of the Rylands *Laur Chanda*, with swinging transparent muslin skirts, but the patterns are no more than dots and never the arabesques. This series was presented to the Bodleian Library in 1640, by Archbishop Laud, and was certainly acquired by him not long before this date. They may be dated also about 1615-1620, and assigned to some provincial patron inside the Mughal dominions. Mughal influence in them is much too strong for an attribution to the Deccan to be sustained at this time, as has been suggested; and the colouring is not nearly rich enough for that school.

It should be possible to distinguish many other Mughal miniatures as the work of provincial centres in this period, but they shade off into the genuinely Rajasthani work at such centres as Bikaner and, after 1620, Mewar, where the Mughal style became the ideal to which every painter sought to attain. A separate picture, not far removed from

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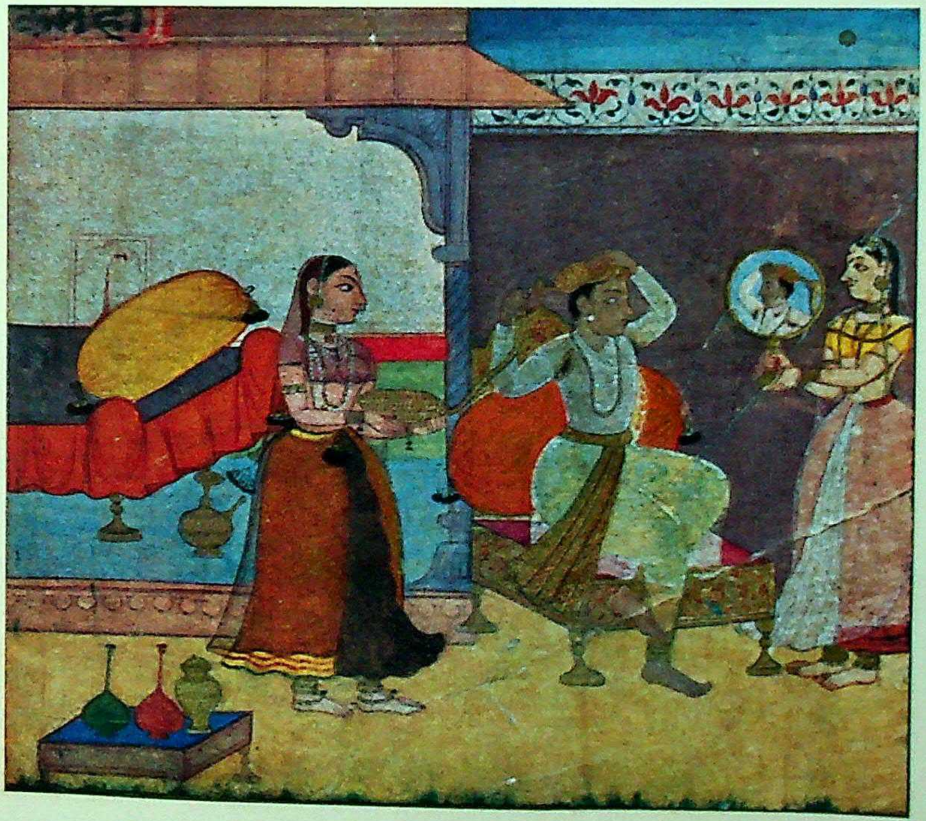
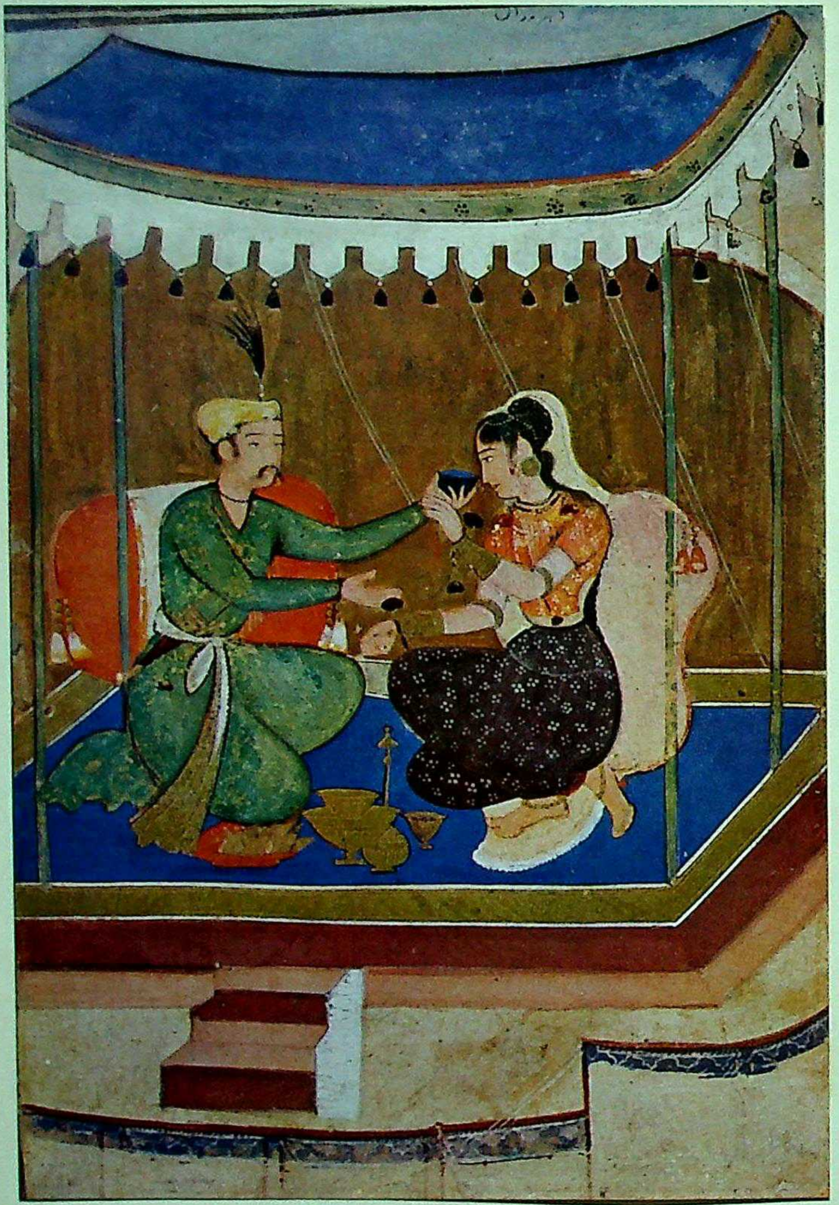
the Laud *Ragamala* set, is reproduced from a small painting of a prince offering a drink to a lady, in the British Museum collection. The movement of the figures is smoother and less angular than it is in the *Ragamala* pages. But its origin must be similar; and it may in fact be an illustration to a rhetorical theme such as the *Rasikapriya.*

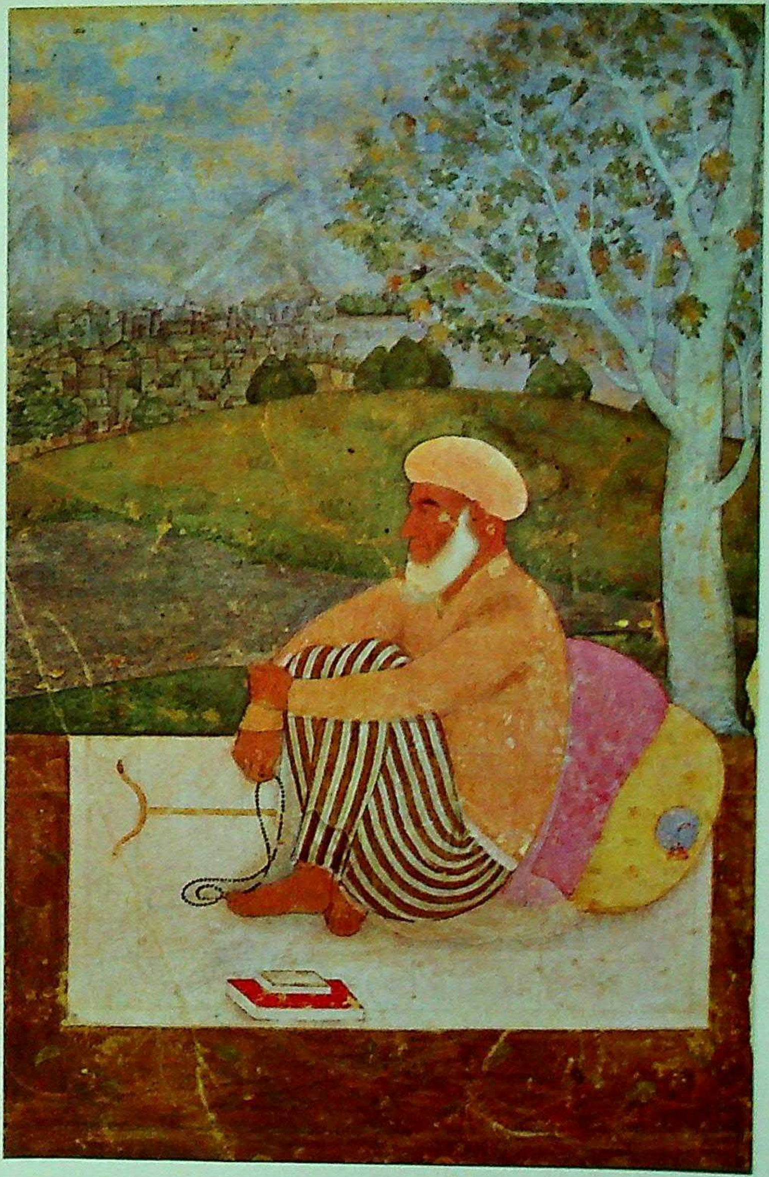
Under Shah Jahan (1628-1658) the pattern set under Jahangir was followed in both separate miniatures and manuscript illustration. That is to say, there was no striking innovation, only a development of the forms already established. Portraits continued to occupy much of the time of the court painters, and some new names occur as signatures, including Bichitr, Chitarman, Anupchhatar and Muhammad Nadir of Samarqand. The tendency to idealization continued; and the draughtsmanship achieved the highest point of finesse. The state portrait was multiplied of the emperor alone on his peacock throne, or in an imaginary group of three thrones under a single canopy, Jahangir seated on the left, Akbar in the centre offering a crown to Shah Jahan on the right. The original by Hashim must have been an accession picture, and is probably that in the India Office Library (Johnson Collection); others are later copies made for presentation. There is

Rasikapriya: Krishna, Radha and her Confidante. Mughal Provincial School, about 1610-1615. ($5^3/_{16} \times 4\frac{1}{2}''$)
15-60 B, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.





A Prince offering a Wine-Cup to a Lady. Mughal Provincial School, about 1615-1620. (6⅝ ×5⅞")
1947-10-11-01, British Museum, London.



A Maulvi Meditating. Mughal School, about 1630. (6¾ × 4¼″)
1949-2-12-05, British Museum, London.

a more feminine touch, an added softness in the drawing of portraits like the unfinished singer *Shir Muhammad* by Muhammad Nadir, in the British Museum. His is perhaps also the hand of a delightful conversation piece in the Spencer Churchill Collection, *A Prince listening to a Singer*. Here are well displayed the new tendencies of naturalism in figure drawing and realistic drapery, combined with unemphatic chiaroscuro and relaxation of perspective. The result is a series of figures related as a pattern, seen against a generalized and carefully vague background of distant landscape.

Such "conversation pieces," even if by court painters, did not always portray court life; for instance early in the reign Inayat, a Khanazad painter, depicted a *Group of Ascetics* (dated 1631), now in the British Museum. They are seated round a wood fire under a great banyan tree, and the fire-light warms the cold flesh tints and the drab dervish robes with its glow. This kind of lighting is one of the romantic foibles of this time, seen for instance in an anonymous portrait of a *maulvi* seated in meditation on a hillside watching the sunset. The head is a penetrating study, while the background quickly fades in the mist.

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The emperor himself seems to have quickly lost interest in this kind of picture; but his son Dara Shikoh (1615-1659) patronized the arts in the latter part of the reign and was of a romantic disposition, and of an inquiring and liberal spirit. He learnt about Hindu gnosticism from Lal Swami and was a pupil of the mystic Miyan Mir. He inspired many miniatures, and among them most probably a large painting of *Dancing Dervishes*, in the Spencer Churchill Collection and once belonging to Warren Hastings; this combines a loosely knit group of minutely studied spectators in front of a westernized building, with a distant mountain seen across a plain full of small figures in grisaille. At the foot of the page is a kind of predella with vivid portraits of Hindu and Moslem saints grouped as in imaginary discussion.

This same combination of most delicately drawn and highly finished figures with a formal setting fading into a misty distance is found also in manuscript illustrations, as for instance in a pair of twin manuscripts of the *Gulistan* and *Bustan* of Sa'di, copied for the emperor in the first and second years of his reign by a favourite Persian calligrapher Hakim Rukh al-Din Mas'ud, called Zarin Qalam. Both found their way to England, the first as a present to King Charles I ten years after it was copied, in 1638, from Shah Jahan himself; the second in 1820 by Sir John Malcolm, the historian of Persia. A comparison with similar miniatures from a manuscript of the *Gulistan* in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, a generation earlier, will show the change from the clear and explicit backgrounds of the Jahangir period. By the end of the reign of Shah Jahan this kind of romantic landscape treatment had engulfed the whole composition, as in the original illustrations to the sumptuous *Shah Jahan-nama* at Windsor Castle, dated 1657. In this record of his reign the figures are still meticulously finished, as in the *durbar* scene by Makr, son of Bichitr, the second generation of court painters of the reign. There is another version of this court picture in the Bodleian Library and the style was kept alive, in frozen state, until the last days of the Mughal court. Indeed this same Shah Jahan manuscript was twice in the eighteenth century "improved" by the addition of

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Shah Jahan-nama: The Emperor Shah Jahan Hunting Deer (page 322). Mughal School, period of Bahadur Shah (1707-1712). (13 ×8⅞") H.M. The Queen, Windsor Castle.

more paintings. Some of these (such as the hunting scene here reproduced) are in the most romantic style which the Mughal school ever achieved, under the emperor Bahadur Shah (1707-1712), when there was a real revival of the court style after the neglect of Aurangzeb (1658-1707). Later still and no doubt under Shah Alam (1759-1806) or at the court of the Kings of Oudh at Lucknow, where was its last Indian home, the compositions were doubled by the addition of facing miniatures extending the compositions to a double page. These additions are extremely skilful but quite lifeless and well exemplify the superficial splendour and real impoverishment of the court style which was only capable of the replica and the pastiche, both of which continue to deceive and so to discredit Mughal painting.

DECCANI PAINTING IN THE STATES OF AHMADNAGAR, BIJAPUR AND GOLCONDA

In a previous chapter it has been explained and regretted how little is known of pre-Mughal painting in the several Islamic sultanates and kingdoms of northern and central India. The painting style of the last Hindu kingdoms of Orissa and Vijayanagar are indeed better known, but now that such important manuscripts for the history of the art of this period have come to light in the past fifteen years, it must not be assumed that more will not be known of this subject. All that can be written about it today must necessarily be provisional. Although no pre-Mughal painting is known at present from the Deccani kingdoms, from what we find when we examine the earliest documents, which are of the period of the formation of the Mughal style, it is clear that there was in the Deccan an active and sophisticated school flourishing there, with a style strong enough to contribute significantly to the Mughal style. Moreover it continued independent of the Mughal style for another hundred years, although increasingly influenced by it in the second half of that period. When the last of the Deccani kingdoms, Bijapur and Golconda, were extinguished in 1686-1687 the Mughal school itself was moving into a decline which they shared and from which there was a short recovery between 1707 and 1739.

The earliest examples of Deccani painting are more closely dated than in any of the later ones, for they are in a volume of poems celebrating the reign of Husayn Nizam Shah I of Ahmadnagar, who ruled from 1553 to 1565, and especially the beauty of his queen who was a princess of Golconda. She survived him and was regent until she was deposed by her own son and imprisoned in 1569. The manuscript is unfinished and its production can be fixed to the years 1565-1569. Most of the twelve miniatures illustrate battle scenes of no great artistic interest, but those which treat of the queen and her marriage introduce us to an art of gorgeous colour and sensuous line. The battle celebrated was that of Talikota in 1565 when Vijayanagar went down before an alliance of the three Moslem states whom she had previously played off against one another. It has been suggested that, with the loot from the Vijayanagar capital, painters and other craftsmen were carried off to the northern capitals of the Nizam Shahs of Ahmadnagar and the Adil Shahs of Bijapur. But, if so, they can hardly have been called upon to depict at once the downfall of their master in this *Tarif i-Husayn Shahi* manuscript. For it can now

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Tarif i-Husayn Shahi: King sitting on the Throne (folio 20 recto). Ahmadnagar, 1565-1569. (6¼ × 5″)
Collection of the Bharata Itihasa Samshodaka Mandala, Poona.

Illustrated above be seen that the ladies represented in it belong to the northern tradition, of pre-Mughal painting which was flourishing in Malwa, and probably also in Ahmadabad, in the mid-sixteenth century. The ladies of Ahmadnagar wear a modified northern costume with *choli* (bodice) and long pigtails braided and ending in a tassel. Only the very long scarf passing round the body below the hips is a southern fashion, to be seen in the Lepakshi frescoes. The palette is certainly different from that of the known northern manuscripts, much richer and more brilliant; but these may well have been characteristics of painting in the Deccan long before Talikota. The high circular horizon and gold sky can certainly be derived from Persian example, and we shall see the debt of all the Deccani kingdoms to Persia for their landscape idiom. This is understandable in view of their close political and economic ties with that country.

These features of feminine dress are also present in a series of *Ragamala* paintings which are the most striking and moving examples of the sixteenth century schools of the Deccan. Otherwise they differ; the ladies' hair is rolled up in a great bun on the nape of the neck, as it had been in the Lepakshi wall paintings; the horizon has disappeared and been replaced by a neutral coloured ground patterned all over with small stylized plants; or occupied by symmetrical architecture crowned by domes over arcading. All these features except the hair-style are of northern origin, or perhaps borrowed independently from Persia. Male costume (as in the *Raga Sri* page reproduced) is also decisively northern; the *jama* with pointed tails is frequently seen in early Akbari miniatures, and probably originates in the area between Delhi and Ahmadabad. The small *pagri* is close to the form found in the earliest Akbari miniatures, the original paintings in the *Gulistan* of 1567 (British Museum, Or. 5302), which have been attributed to the hand of Bukhara artists. That such a painter may have worked also in the Deccan is supported by a manuscript now in the Bankipore Library in Patna, signed by a scribe Yusuf and dedicated to Ibrahim Adil in 1569, presumably Ibrahim Qutb Shah of Golconda, who ruled from 1550 to 1580. This manuscript contains seven miniatures completely in the Bukhara idiom of that date.

This set of *Ragamala* pictures was until recently preserved in the Bikaner Palace but now partly in the National Museum of India, while similar *Rags* are in the Baroda Museum and the Khajanchi Collection (here reproduced). This last represents Raga Sri, the King of Love, holding a lotus flower, enthroned on a Persian type of throne and attended by a tall page who holds the royal sword and fans his master with a scarf, in a typical Deccani gesture. On his right is a musician playing a *vina*. The plastic shading of this robe must be due to Mughal influence; and this in turn implies that the set cannot be earlier than 1590. It was in 1591 that Burhan II returned from the Mughal court, where he had lived for eight years as a political exile, to seize the throne of Ahmadnagar, which he held for only five years. He might have commissioned this series; but it is more likely to have found its way to Bikaner from Bijapur where Raja Anup Singh (1669-1698) of Bikaner served with the Mughal armies at the time of the final campaign in the Deccan. These *Ragamala* illustrations moreover are in a different idiom from that of Ahmadnagar, as known from the *Tarif i-Husayn Shahi*, more vigorous and also more southern.

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A Bijapuri origin for pictures of this kind is supported by consideration of the one almost certain attribution to that school, in the sixteenth century, a richly illustrated encyclopaedia known as the *Nujum al-Ulum*, in the Chester Beatty Library, which is securely dated 1570. Among the 876 miniatures which adorn this remarkable little volume, many of them illustrating weapons and utensils, others the constellations, are a series illustrating the spiritual rulers of aspects of the earth who are depicted as formidable ladies in south Indian dress, tall and slender as those in the *Ragamala* paintings, and like

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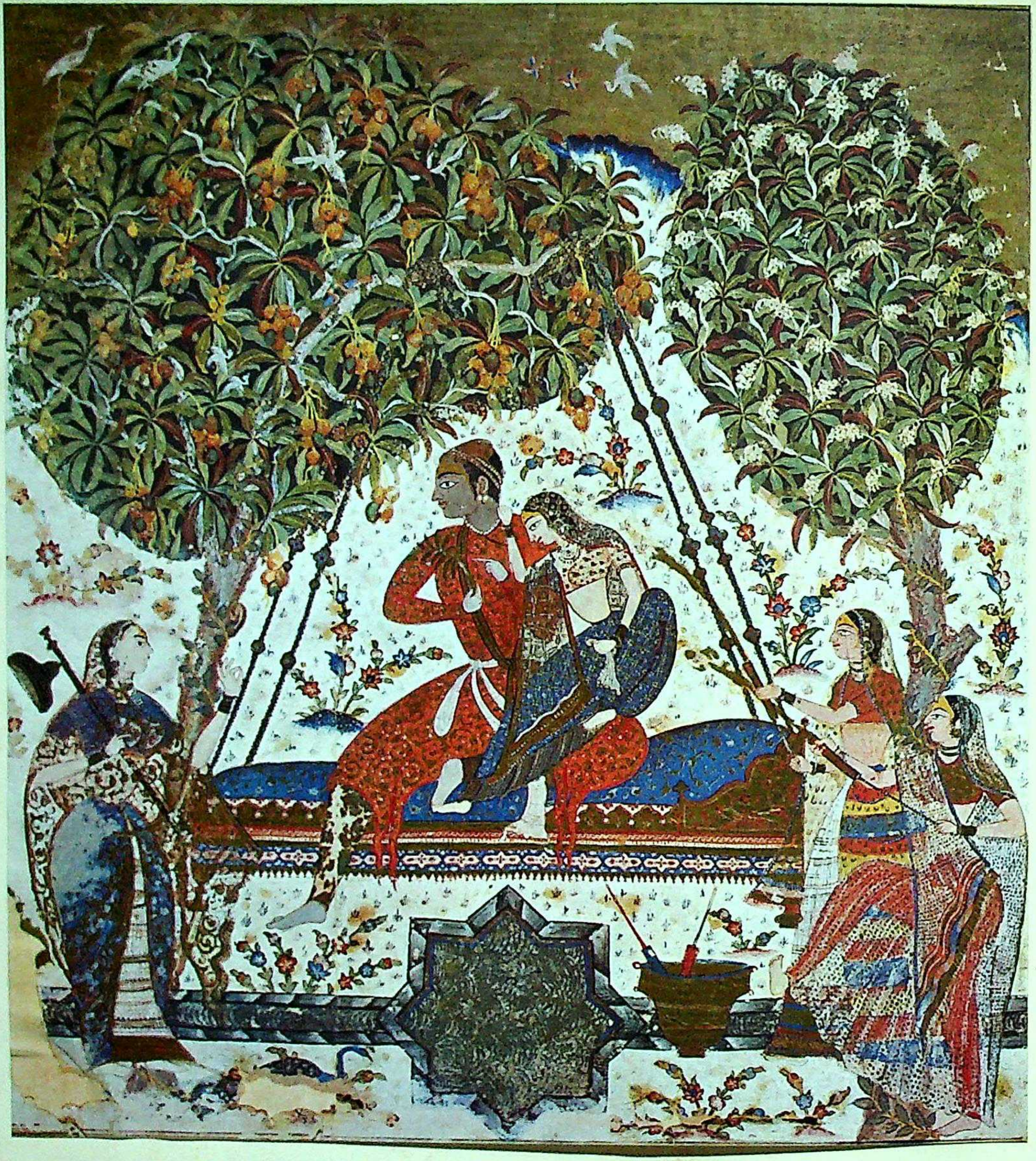
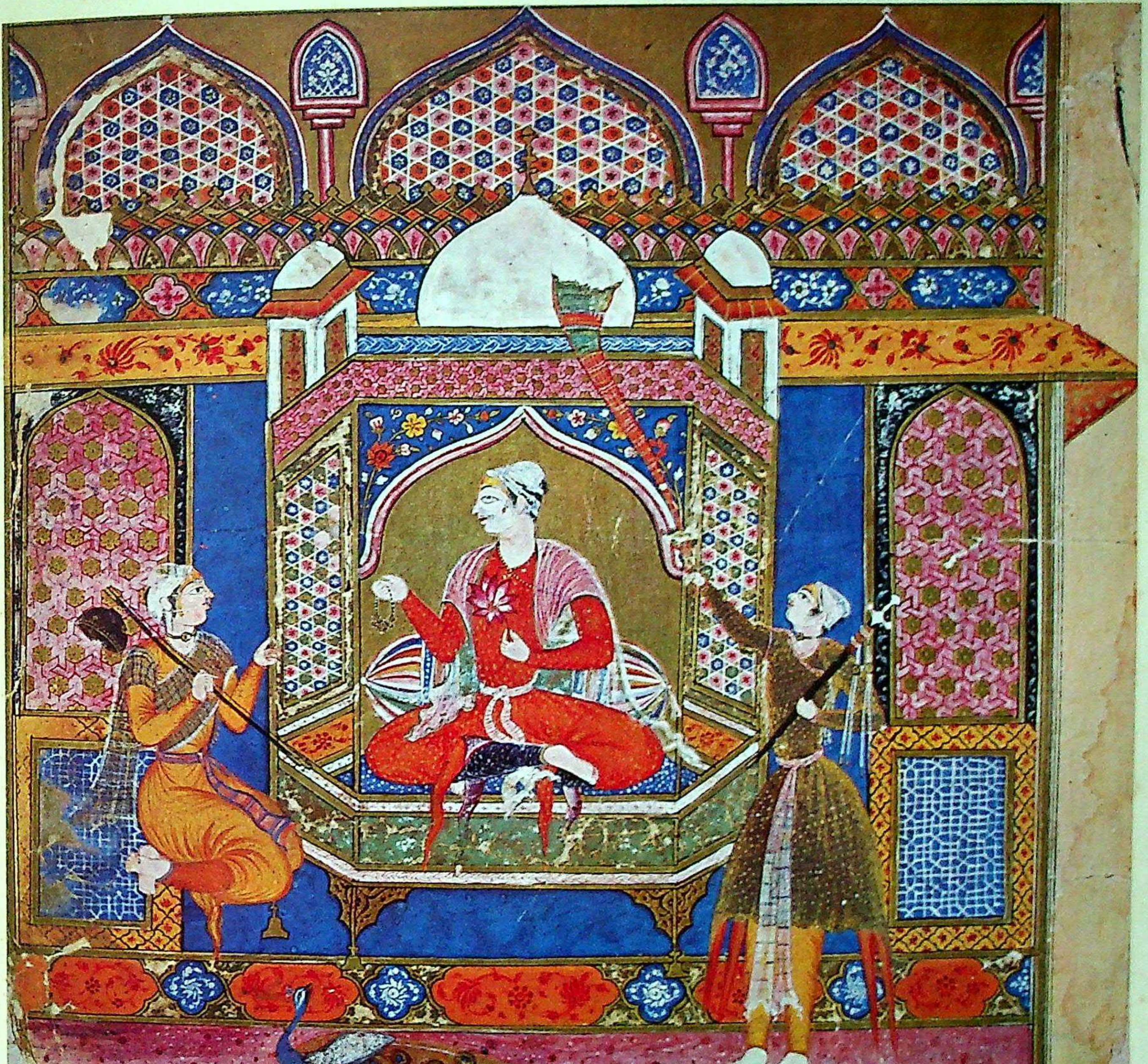


Ragamala Series: Hindola Rag. Ahmadnagar, 1580-1590. (7⅝ × 7″)
National Museum, New Delhi.



Ragamala Series: Raga Sri. Bijapur, 1590-1600. (7⅞ × 6⅞″)
Khajanchi Collection, Bikaner.

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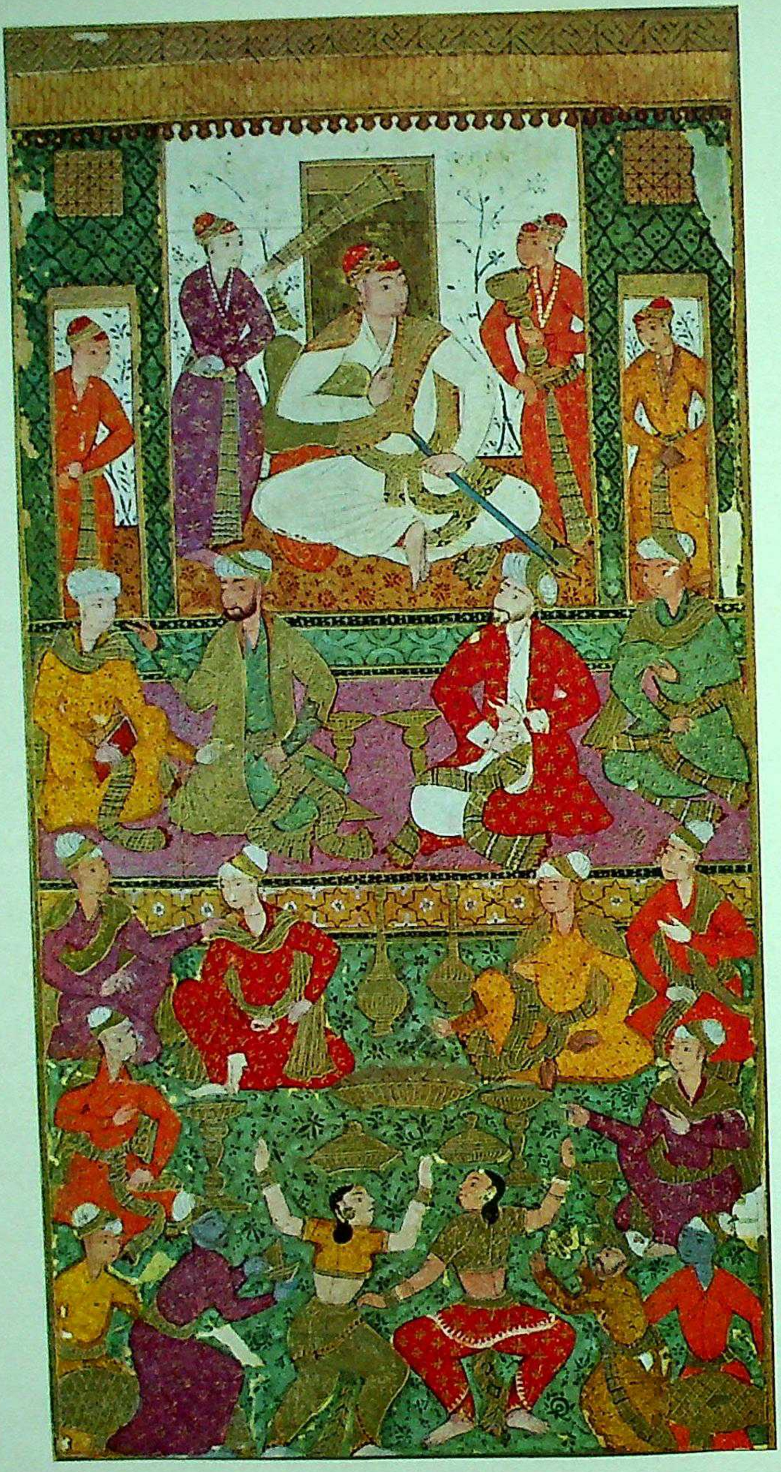
Nujum al-Ulum: The Throne of Prosperity (folio 191 recto). Bijapur, dated 1570. (8 × 5¾″)
The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.

them against a diapered ground or in an architectural niche. This school of Bijapur was patronized by Ali Adil Shah I (1558-1580) and his successor Ibrahim II (1580-1627), both of whom were patrons of art and letters while the latter was an expert in Indian music and author of a book on this subject, the *Nauras-nama*. He was the owner of the *Nujum al-Ulum* manuscript and he might have commissioned the *Ragamala* series in the 1590s; Bijapur had a close connection with Turkey, and the astronomical illustrations in this book may well derive from an Ottoman Turkish manuscript, such as the work of Fuzuli. The *Ruhani* pictures, as those of the *Aspects of the Earth* are called, and the *Ragamala* are, as we have seen, Indian in their connections, with definite echoes of the Lepakshi style. They well exemplify the luxuriant aestheticism of the Adil Shahi court in their daring and brilliantly successful colouring and the vigour of the simplified compositions. The *Throne of Prosperity* is a symbolic diagram of a propitious throne of seven Illustration page 120 stages each supported by its characteristic inhabitants, from elephants and tigers to palm-trees, through storeys of peacocks and primitive tribes. These friezes of little figures recall the wood-carved house fronts of Gujarat, or the step-risers of the temples of the Deccan with their friezes of elephants. The colouring of this page is in the Islamic Persian tradition, especially the arabesques on the top of the throne, but this is surmounted by a purely Deccani piece of foliage against the deep blue sky. The stylized plants on either side of the throne recall the margin decoration in a Gujarati manuscript of early sixteenth century date. There is thus a long Indian tradition behind this miniature.

There is a single *Ragamala* painting from another set otherwise unknown, in the National Museum of India, which is also certainly Deccani but has closer connections Illustration page 118 with the north than those; the costumes in it are nearer to the John Rylands *Laur Chanda* illustrations, with *orhni* spreading out to a wide tail (a feature also found in the *Chaurapanchasika* group), a skirt with horizontal multi-coloured stripes, and the male *jama* with four points. The trees also resemble those in the *Laur Chanda* book, forming a compact mass of foliage, from which birds emerge. In this *Ragamala* picture however the trees are the colourful mango, and the ladies are of the tall stately type of the other *Ragamala* series. There is greater lyrical sweetness than in the other set, but the drawing is less strong. A rivulet and small star-shaped pond in the foreground are in Persian style, and the hillside behind is of a modified Persian type, with circular horizon and gold sky. The girls on the right are squirting at the couple in the swing the saffron-coloured water of the Holi festival in the spring. The date is probably 1580-1590, and the locality Ahmadnagar.

Golconda had been an independent state since 1512, and by the end of the sixteenth century it was the wealthiest of the Deccan kingdoms. This was due to the active trade from the ports along the east coast from which iron and cotton goods were shipped to South-east Asia, while a considerable trade was carried on with Persia, especially in the painted cottons which afterwards gained a high reputation in western Europe, to which they were brought back by the Dutch and English East India Companies. Early in the seventeenth century diamonds too were discovered, thus adding a further good source of revenue. This wealth was visibly apparent in the gold jewellery worn by both



Dancing before Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. Golconda, about 1590. (8¼ × 4⁵/₁₆″)
Add. 16762, folio 160 verso, British Museum, London.

women and men, but especially by the dancers and courtesans for whom Golconda was renowned. A new capital was built and named Hyderabad in 1589, in honour of Bhagmati, wife of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (1580-1611). Political as well as economic ties with Persia were very close, the ruling family being of Persian origin and employing Persians in senior posts of the administration. But the great mass of the people were Hindus, and there was complete religious toleration.

Like Bijapur, Golconda continued independent of the Mughals, though paying tribute, until 1686. In the first quarter of the seventeeth century she financed the defence of Ahmadnagar by the Peshwa, Malik Ambar. Her later art has long been familiar through the many albums of portraits of her rulers brought back by the Dutch merchants in the late seventeeth century. These were of course only bazaar copies and were quite rightly held in low esteem. It is only recently that earlier paintings have been identified as Golconda work. These are some manuscript illustrations and a portrait now to be discussed; and the large and handsome pintadoes which have been dated by Mr John Irwin to about 1635-1650. They were made for use as curtains or wall hangings, as much as eight feet high, and are covered with pictorial designs, generally figures in architectural settings, but of varied origin, European, Persian and Javanese as well as native; but inasmuch as the technique was not one of direct painting but of the transfer of a sketch or muster to the cotton, they fall outside the scope of this book. Stylistically however they are related to the Golconda miniatures and help to body out the very scanty material available for an opinion of Golconda art.

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The earliest miniatures so far identified as Golconda work were found bound up in a *Diwan* of Hafiz dated 1643 in the British Museum (Add. 16762). They are five in number and have nothing to do with the manuscript. They represent scenes of palace life at the court of a young ruler who is seated enthroned, holding his typically long straight Deccani sword in the centre of one of these pages. He wears the white muslin coat with embroidered vertical bands which is known as the court costume of Golconda from the albums of later copies already referred to. All five pages are lavishly enriched with gold, in the sky, the architecture and the costumes of the numerous figures. In all, dancing girls are entertaining the company in the acrobatic style which is known to have been practised by the professional dancers of Golconda, from the description of William Methwold written in 1622 after four years at Masulipatam as Principal at the East India Company's factory. Next most striking in the compositions is the symmetrical and unfunctional architecture, which consists of several registers of flat screens one above the other. No attempt is made to represent brackets, posts or niches, such as were usual in Mughal miniatures and prominent in the *Ragamala* pictures of Bijapur. The ground appears to be covered with patterned carpets, but no border patterns are shown. There is no Mughal influence at all; on the contrary, the colouring is clearly related to Safavi miniatures of the early Abbasi period (1587-1629), especially in the free use of purple and the type of wall painting represented, in one case showing blue foxes or jackals. A date of about 1590 allows for the identification of the ruler as Muhammad Quli himself, as proposed by Mr Barrett who discovered this set.

He was succeeded by Muhammad Qutb Shah (1611-1626) of whom we have a portrait as he sits in diwan early in his reign. He wears this same dress and a small tight-fitting cap, and the composition has gained in sophistication and skill, while retaining the strict symmetry of the 1590 pages. There is some Mughal influence in the plastic rendering of the drapery of the courtiers and grooms; but this is one of the most decorative drawings ever made in India; the artist having delighted in the diaper patterns which cover the sky and the two registers below, and in the transparent muslin of the ruler's *jama* and covering the throne on which he is seated. He has also made the most of the silhouette of the many gold vessels before the throne, and of tiny coloured glass vases in niches above it. This last is a feature which recurs in the Golconda painted cottons of the second quarter of the century.

An undated manuscript (British Museum, Or. 16880) of a pantheistic Sufi poem with prose paraphrases is richly illustrated with more than twenty miniatures occupying the whole page inside the margins (about 17 by 9.5 cm.). Gold is again freely used, a peculiar feature being colouring of skies in both gold and blue in separate bands, the gold being below the blue, and both enlivened with conventional clouds. This corresponds to the two quite separate sky conventions used in the Muhammad Qutb Shah portrait. The men's costumes and women's dresses are of the types current under Ibrahim II of Bijapur and the trees are of the Deccani type with richly tinted edges. Moreover some plants are silhouetted against a mass of dark foliage, which is another Deccani feature prominent in a separate picture of a tall woman speaking to a small bird, in the Chester Beatty Library. She has a blue complexion and her hair is knotted on top of her head and she has been called a *yogini*. But she is richly dressed and covered with rich jewellery, so that it does not seem amiss to identify her as the Queen of Sheba, who, in the Moslem version, exchanged love letters with Solomon by the intermediary of a hoopoe. The foliage and landscape in this drawing agree with that in the manuscript Or. 16880 which came to the British Museum with the William Yule Collection in 1847. Some coarsening in the handling of its miniatures suggests that it may be a rather later copy, but it is so different from the Golconda style of the mid-seventeenth century, as represented by a large and lavishly but coarsely illustrated manuscript of the *Khawar-nama* in Deccani Urdu in the India Office Library, which is said to be dated 1649, that it is better to date it not much later than 1605, to which date the Chester Beatty Queen of Sheba is assigned.

If the Muhammad Qutb Shah and the Queen of Sheba are Golconda work of about 1605-1615, then it may be that Golconda was also the milieu of one of the greatest artists working in India in this period. This was a certain Muhammad Ali, if we accept the ascription written on the mounts of two accomplished and exquisite drawings of poets in flowering gardens. One of these, a bearded senior in sober dress, sits on the grass before a blossoming cherry; he holds in his hand a gold-tooled book and before him are pen-box and writing wallet, and also wine flask and gold cup. The other is an elegantly dressed young man seated on a gilt stool, reading a book like the first, and with a falcon beside him on a perch. Behind him are a tamarisk and sycamore in young leaf and the trunk of a chenar tree. In the foreground of both pictures are jonquils and in the background

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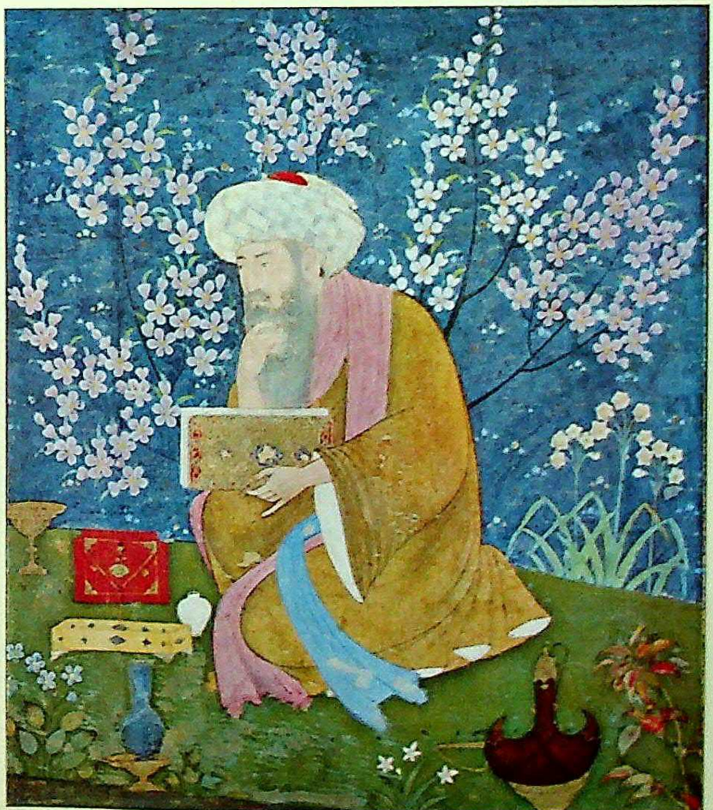
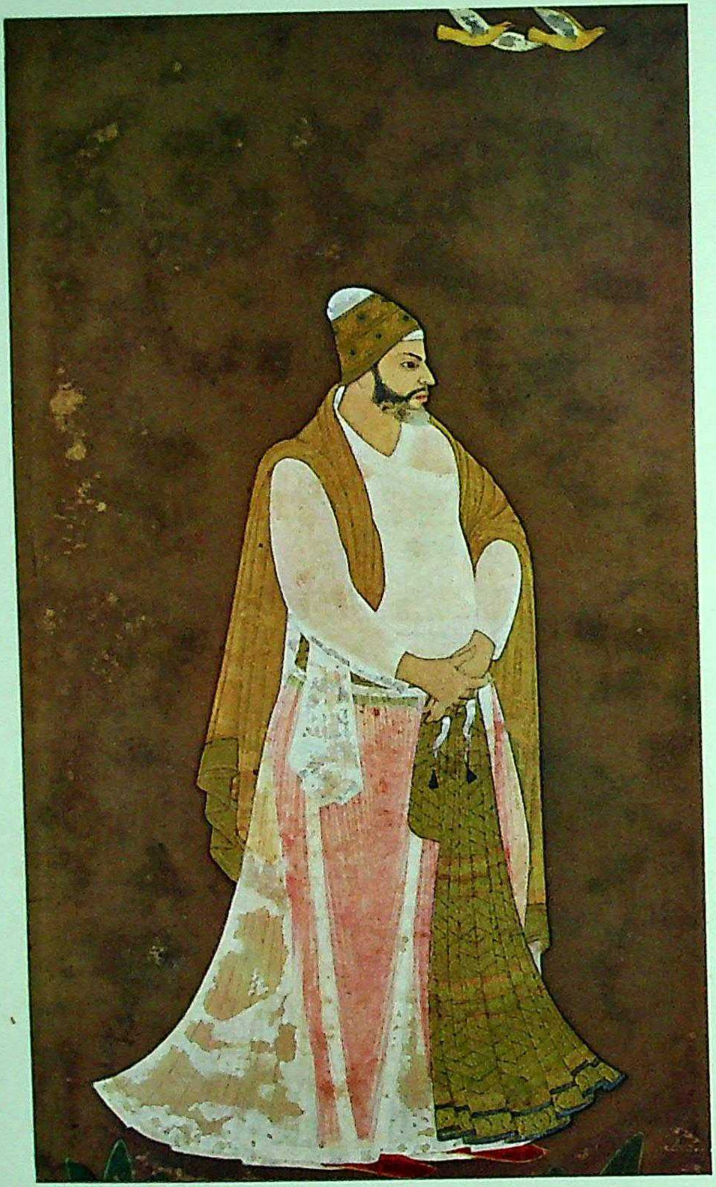
beyond the low horizon an all-over pattern of small flowering plants. These are not quite regular as in the Muhammad Qutb Shah portrait, but the idea is the same. In both cases too there is a certain realism in the drapery and an unusual penetration in the drawing of the face. At the same time the romantic flavour and the assurance in placing the figures strongly suggest a connection with Persia, as has more than once been observed. The brilliance of the colour is however Deccani. It has been thought that Bijapur was the home of the finest Deccani work; but it must be admitted that the portraits of Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1626), which will be discussed in a moment, are in a different, less Persian style. It must however be recognized that there does not seem to have been any great difference between the styles of the Deccani kingdoms at this time.

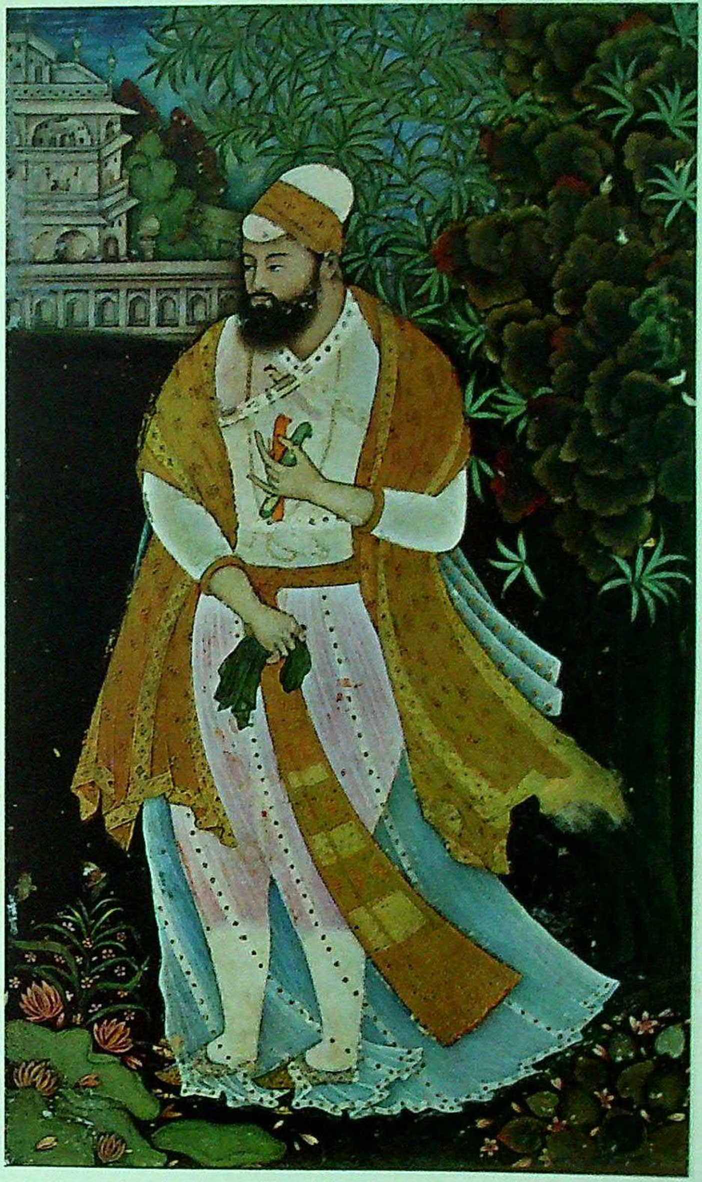
There is one other drawing which should be mentioned in connection with these two poets, because of its romantic character, rich colour and background of flowering trees, an angel holding a great fish, probably an astronomical subject rather than an illustration to the story of Tobit, as has been suggested. This is in the Musée Guimet, Paris, where it is

Poet in a Garden, signed Muhammad Ali. Golconda, about 1605-1615. (4⅝ × 4")
14.66, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.





Portrait of a Courtier. Bijapur School, about 1615. (6⅝ × 3⅞″)
1937-4-10-03, British Museum, London.



Ibrahim II Adil Shah of Bijapur (1580-1626). Bijapur, about 1615. (6¼ × 4″)
1937-6-10-02, British Museum, London.

attributed to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. The angel has brilliantly coloured wings and wears a realistic cloak but the skirt is covered with a fine arabesque design on a gold ground. The row of flowers in the foreground is less naturalistic than in the other two, but it has a similar unusual combination of the realistic face and decorative background, and like them is probably a work of the Golconda school.

Turning from these to the portraits of Ibrahim II of Bijapur, one in the British Museum and the other in the Bikaner Palace museum, one is conscious of a stronger element of Indian opulence in the movement of the figures in both, and a complete departure from symmetry or central balance. In both there is a strong axial swing; the forms are fuller and more baroque. Instead of the fluted folds of the poets' coats, here there is the swing of wide skirts fanning out like the ripples of a spent wave. This opulence comes neither from Persia nor from Mughal India; it may be the reflection of a local tradition of wall painting, for which there is only scanty evidence in the existing fragmentary remains, but the portraits do show a great sense of scale, especially the Bikaner picture which must date from about 1595. The portrait in the British Museum shows Ibrahim some twenty years older, as he was about 1615 at the age of forty-five. Again his presence is imposing and now with greater weight and solidity. He stands holding the *kurtar* or wooden clappers used by musicians for marking the beat, and it should be remembered that he was a notable musician. Exotic foliage and water-lilies at his feet are another southern feature, and one that was also shared by the Golconda painters. The clearly modelled palace buildings in the background and the trees beyond them are again close to the background of the Golconda picture of the Queen of Sheba and the Sufi poetry book (British Museum, Or. 16880). The shading of the buildings is presumably due to Mughal influence, but might be through western models acquired from Goa, which adjoined Bijapur territory. There was evidently a school of portraiture in Bijapur and several pictures are known of courtiers, which show a more intense life than the efficient reporting of the average Mughal court portrait. On two of these the white pigment of the coat has flaked away in places, revealing the under-drawing, which is seen to be textured instead of the mere outline drawing of the Mughal practice. Brilliantly coloured birds and plants provide a foil to the low tone of the figures in these drawings, and connect them with the Ibrahim portraits.

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An exotic and romantic drawing of a sleeping prince, fanned and massaged by his pages, in the collection of the former German State Museums in Berlin, sometimes called *The Siesta*, differs in feeling from the crisper work of Bijapur. The wrinkled bark of the chenar tree and the luxuriant foliage above connect it rather with Golconda; and it has been noted that such subjects are included in the repertory of the Golconda cotton cloth painters. There is also as much plastic feeling in the drapery as in the portrait miniature of Muhammad Qutb Shah. It has been attributed to Ahmadnagar, and to about 1605; but it differs greatly from the dry and restrained portrait of Malik Ambar, the great national leader of 1605-1626, in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, which must surely be Ahmadnagar work of this period. In landscape too, it is nearer to the group here assigned to Golconda. But as was said above there is a strong common character in all the work of the Deccani schools, and it is too soon to discriminate finally between the work of the three painters. It is sufficient now to call attention to the achievements of Deccani painting between 1565 and 1627.

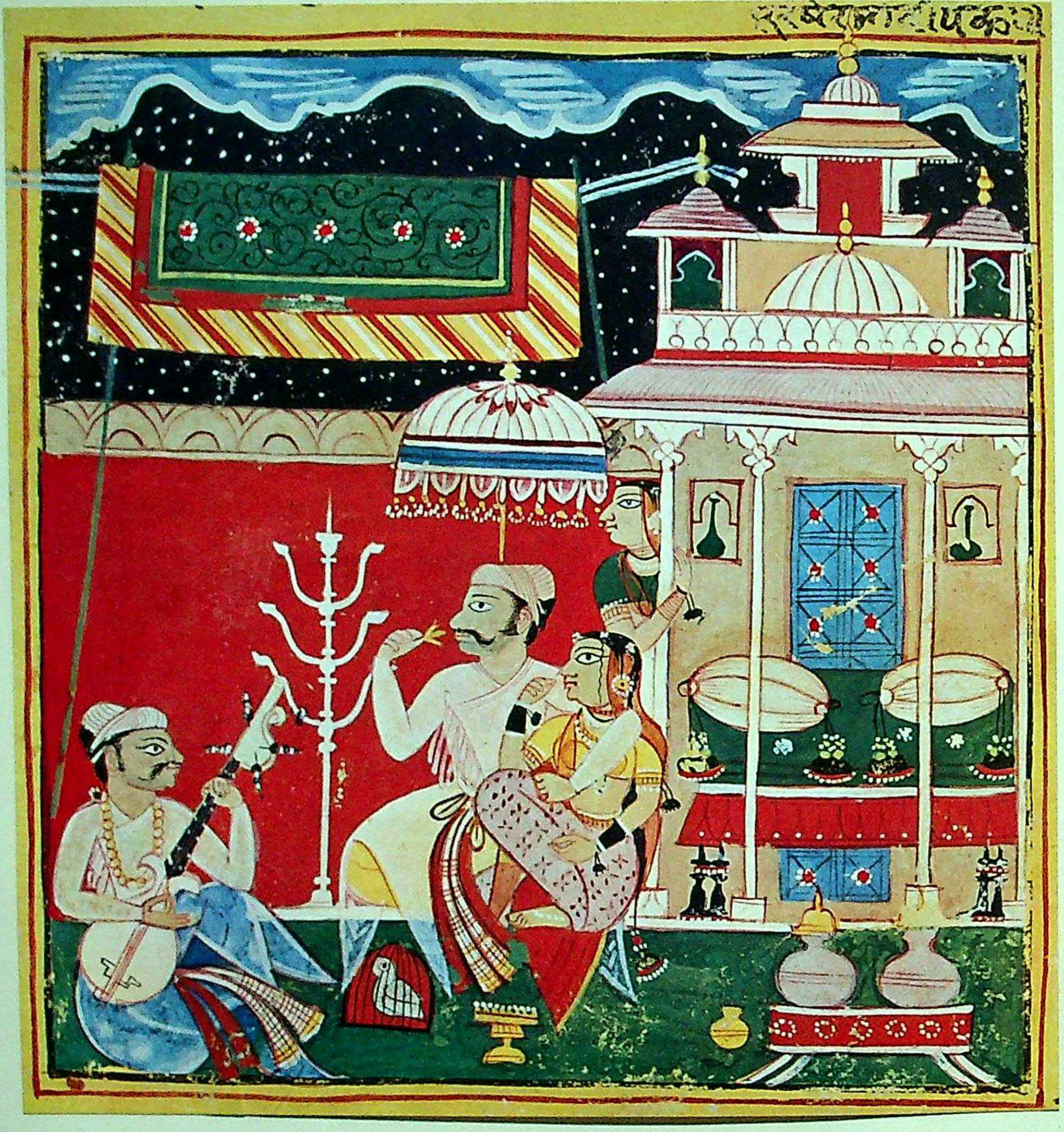
Thereafter, the vitality of the school seems to have been sapped, and all that remains of their tradition is the sense of design and taste in rich detail. A half-length portrait of Muhammad Adil Shah of Bijapur in the British Museum is a fair index of the situation during his reign (1627-1656), with its weak, impassive face, strings of pearls and rich gold brocade. Golconda painting was rather more exuberant; and even under the last of the Qutb Shahs, Abu'l Hasan, known as Tana Shah (1672-1687), the swinging movement and sense of gorgeous colour persist, as in some processional pictures showing the Shah on his state elephant. Moreover there persisted a popular memory of the beautiful queen Bhagmati even in the eighteenth century, when the Nizam Shahs in Hyderabad inherited something of the Golconda tradition, while a fresher and more romantic echo is to be seen in the small coastal state of Arcot.

THE SCHOOLS OF RAJASTHAN

SEVENTEENTH TO NINETEENTH CENTURY

RAJASTHAN, the "Abode of Princes," is divided into two clearly defined regions, each of a quite distinctive physical character, by the high range of the Aravalli Hills. From Champaner where they link with the Vindhya Mountains, the Aravallis run north-west dividing Rajasthan from Gujarat, and at the famous Jain pilgrimage centre of Mount Abu turn north-east to form a great barrier as far as Ajmer. They continue towards Delhi slowly decreasing in height. To the west of the barrier stretches the salt desert to the banks of the River Indus, a desert watered only by the River Luni, which rising in the Lake of Pushkar near Ajmer makes its five hundred mile flow into the Rann of Cutch. Into this hard, forbidding but strangely beautiful land the Indian had penetrated even in the prehistoric period. During the classical period when the climate was perhaps more favourable than it is now, the men of the desert had the wealth and creative energy to erect some of the finest groups of temples in northern India, as the ruins of Osia and Kiradu bear witness. In the sixteenth century the desert was divided between three states, Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer, each of which had some part to play in the history of miniature painting.

It is the Aravalli Hills which preventing the advance of the sand dunes preserve the identity of eastern Rajasthan. Here the climate is more temperate and there is an adequate supply of good soil and water. The hills themselves are rich in minerals, whose exploitation, as we have already said, helped the Sisodiyas in their prolonged resistance to the Muslim invaders. The eastern boundary of Rajasthan is formed by the course of that noble river, the Chambal, which from its source in the Vindhyas to the west of Mandu flows north-east roughly parallel to the Aravallis, and having described a huge curve north of Gwalior empties into the Jumna between Agra and Allahabad. Beyond the Chambal to the east, hilly country, thick with jungle and sloping into Bundelkhand and the valley of the River Betwa, provided additional protection to Rajasthan. To the south lay the high tableland of Malwa with its rich black earth. At the beginning of the Mughal period eastern Rajasthan too was divided among a number of Rajput states, each enjoying a nominal independence when they could escape the attentions of their more powerful neighbours. Mewar of course in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was paramount.



Dipak Raga (from a Ragamala), painted by Nisaradi. Mewar School, Chawand 1605. (Miniature 6⅜ ×6⅛″)
G. K. Kanoria Collection, Calcutta.

From the thirteenth century the Muslim rulers of Northern India had tried to subdue eastern Rajasthan. Their numerous punitive expeditions from Delhi, Malwa and Gujarat often met with temporary or local success, but they were unable to retain their hold. Rajasthan beyond the Aravallis was less troubled. The possession of this poor soil was more a matter of prestige than a strategic necessity: Sher Shah ruefully remarked after his campaign against Jodhpur that he had hazarded the empire for a handful of barley. This intermittent warfare, which lasted for over two hundred years, must have slowly drained the resources and energy of the smaller courts. On the other hand it produced the Rajput type, proud of his clan, brave and resourceful, and schooled to an inflexible code of honour which made equal demands on women as on men, for the women in times of desperation were called upon to perform the terrible *jauhar* to preserve their chastity unsullied by the enemy. With this went an ideal of chivalry not unlike that of mediaeval Europe where the knight was devoted to his unattainable lady without any hope of the reward of her physical love. For all his admirable qualities however the Rajput had one defect; he could not combine with his fellows against the common enemy. It was Akbar who found the way not only to bring the Rajputs to heel but also to use them for the advantage of the empire. In 1562 at Ajmer, Bihar Mall the raja of Amber (Jaipur) was graciously received by Akbar, and offered his eldest daughter in marriage. The offer was accepted, and the princess eventually became the mother of Jahangir. This union, pollution in the eyes of the Sisodiyas, was to the mutual advantage of Akbar and the house of Amber. Akbar acquired a sure ally, for Rajput faith once given was absolute, and able and resolute soldiers. Amber enjoyed privilege and influence at court and a share in the riches of the wars and vast provinces the family was soon called upon to conduct and administer. Bhagwandas and his son Man Singh, the successors of Bihar Mall, were with the imperial forces at the storming of Chitor in 1568. In the following year they persuaded Bundi to hand over the great fortress of Ranthambor and to submit on very favourable terms. In 1570 Bikaner and Jaisalmer also offered their submission and gave girls to the imperial harem. Finally in 1581 Udai Singh of Jodhpur, the most important state in Rajasthan after Mewar, gave his sister Jodh Bai in marriage to Akbar, and his daughter to Prince Salim, later to become the emperor Jahangir. The Rajputs realized that imperial suzerainty, fairly and discreetly interpreted by Akbar and his immediate successors, was a small price to pay for religious toleration, and for place, power and wealth far beyond that enjoyed in their own states.

From all this Mewar alone stood obstinately aloof, despising their fellow Rajputs who could accept service with the foreigner and allow their blood to be polluted by his. After the storming of Chitor Udai Singh, the ruler of Mewar, withdrew westward to a place close to the security of the Aravalli Hills where he had already constructed a lake. Here he began to build a new capital, named after him, Udaipur. He was succeeded in 1572 by Rana Pratap, a man in the finest Sisodiya tradition. A series of reverses culminated in the disastrous battle at the Haldighat Pass in 1576. Rana Pratap was forced to abandon Udaipur and take to the hills. Fortunately the engagement of the imperial armies elsewhere allowed him a respite, and when this remarkable man died in

1597 he seems to have regained control of the whole of Mewar, except for the ancient capital. He was succeeded by his no less able son, Amar Singh I. During the latter's reign, in 1605, a set of *Ragamala* paintings, most of which are in the collection of Gopi Krishna Kanoria, was painted at Chawand by the artist Nisaradi. Chawand or Chaud is a small town in the mountains to the south-west of Udaipur. It was inhabited by the aboriginal Bhils, and Pratap had withdrawn there after the disaster of Haldighat. It is essential to establish the status, stylistically, of this set of pictures, from which the *Dipak Raga* is here illustrated. It has been suggested that the artist, a Muslim, was trained elsewhere and migrated to Mewar. It is however difficult to believe, in the last three decades of the sixteenth century when the Mughal ateliers were rapidly expanding and wealth was flowing into those Rajput states which had made their submission, that an artist in search of employment would have gone to the one state in Rajasthan whose dwindling resources were strained to the utmost in her unaided resistance to the Mughals. Again some scholars have seen in this series, as in all miniatures of the period not in Western India style, the influence or example of the Mughal school, derived at second or third hand perhaps, from some "popular" or provincial painting of the late Akbar period. There is however no evidence that such "popular" Mughal painting existed much before 1610, nor does it seem to have left any impress for another decade or so even on those Rajput states whose rulers were closely associated with the imperial court. Still less could its influence have been felt at Mewar at this particular moment of her struggle: it would have been ironic indeed if Mewar, having rejected all else, should have succumbed to her enemy's mode of artistic expression. One is forced to conclude that Nisaradi was in every sense a Mewar artist—the employment by rulers of one religion of craftsmen or mercenaries of the other was common practice—and was painting in the Style of Mewar of 1605. This style is unmistakably related to the *Chaurapanchasika* Group, especially to the *Gita Govinda* and *Bhagavata Purana* series. Of course it reflects the hard conditions of the time. The isolated court, little more than an armed camp in a small mountain town, was separated by forty years of hard and desperate fighting from the spacious setting of Chitor. The delicate drawing and precise construction of the old paintings have been lost, and with them the exquisite protagonists and general air of gracious refinement. But the elements of style remain, the general composition, the large juxtaposed areas of solid colour, the conventions for sky and landscape, all treated to express a mood of the imagination. There remains also something of life, a rough country vigour, and the fresh charm of what was now virtually a folk art. The importance of these paintings is twofold. They indicate, more perhaps than any other piece of evidence, that Mewar had been the source of the great *Chaurapanchasika* style. At the same time they illustrate the bucolic level of accomplishment to which the Mewar artist had been reduced before he was suddenly made aware of a rich and magnificent court whose painting was directed towards ideals quite other than his own.

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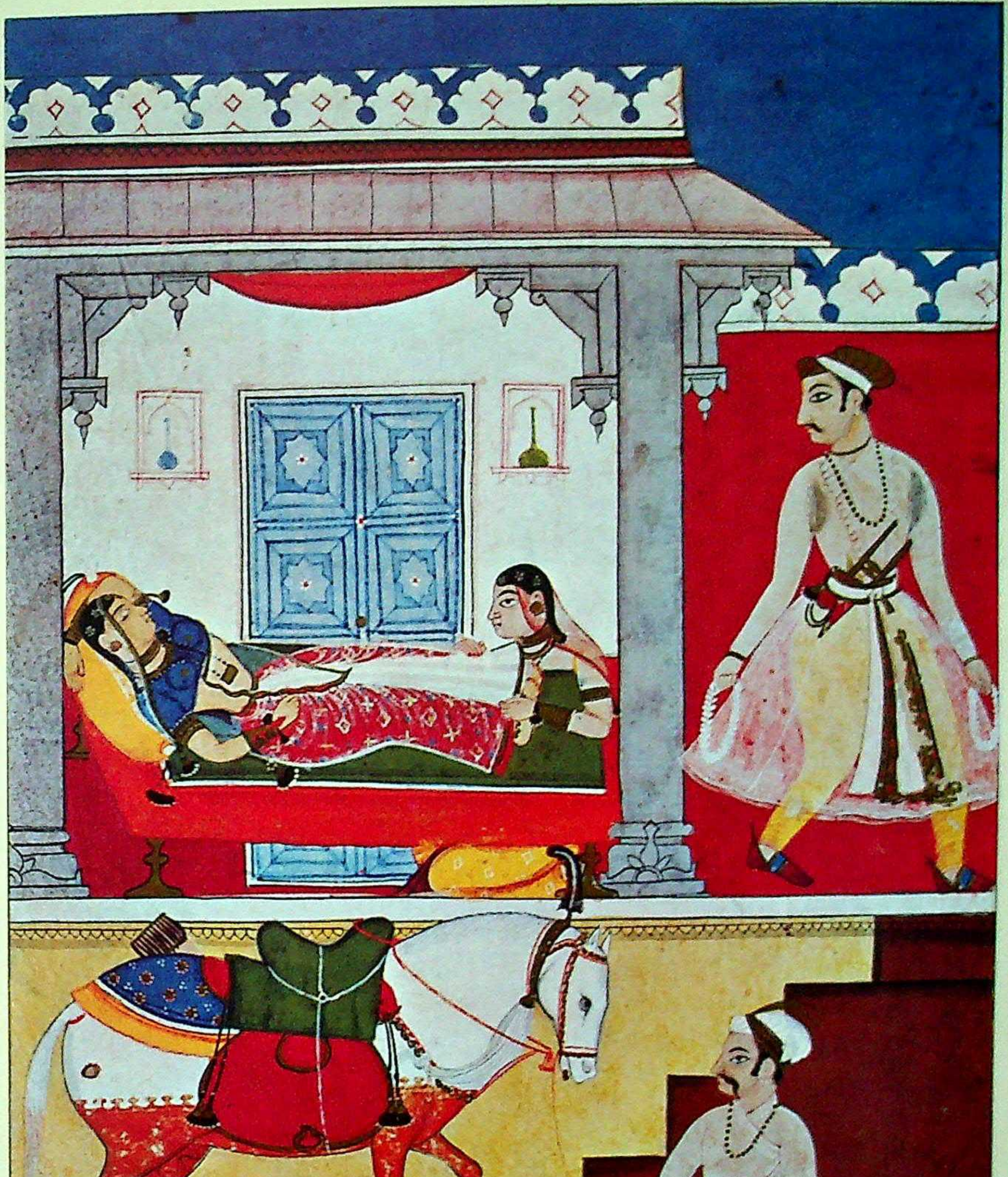
During the early years of Jahangir's reign Mewar roused herself to fresh efforts. The imperial armies were defeated in 1608 and 1610: even Chitor was recaptured. Suddenly in 1614 came the collapse, and the long agony was at an end. Amar Singh's submission



Lalita Ragini (from a Ragamala), painted by Sahibdin. Mewar School, Udaipur 1628. (8½ × 5¾")
No. 23 H, M. Khajanchi Collection, Bikaner.

was made less bitter by the courteous behaviour of Prince Khurram, the future Shah Jahan, and by the wise sugaring of the pill by Jahangir, who refrained from asking for Sisodiya women for the imperial harem or for vassal service from the reigning prince, merely from the heir apparent. Amar Singh's son Karan Singh went to court, and an attractive portrait of this shy and, to the eyes of the Mughals, rude young savage appears in Jahangir's Memoirs. Amar Singh died broken-hearted in 1620 and was succeeded by Karan Singh. Immediately peace had its effect. Ambitious building schemes were undertaken. The city of Udaipur was surrounded by impressive fortifications, and the famous Jag-Mandir was built on an island of the Pichola Lake, where Prince Khurram, soon to become emperor, stayed a little while before Karan's death. In all these buildings the artists, unaware of or uninterested in Mughal example, harked back to the great days of the fifteenth century. In 1628 Karan was succeeded by his son Jagat Singh, whose long reign lasted until 1652. On Jahangir's death in 1628, Shah Jahan, a friend to the Sisodiyas, gave permission for the reoccupation of Chitor, and there followed two generations in which, in the fervid prose of James Tod, the Sisodiya princes "exchanged the din of arms for voluptuous inactivity." The chief architectural monument of Jagat Singh's reign is the Jagadisa Temple at Udaipur. This too, as Professor Goetz has emphasized, is a conscious revival of the style current in the reign of Rana Kumbha. Several dated illustrated manuscripts have survived from the beginning and end of Jagat Singh's reign, and from the beginning of the reign of his successor Raj Singh (1652-1681). The earliest is again a *Ragamala* set, dated 1628, painted in Udaipur by the artist Sahibdin. Most of the pages are in the collection of Motichand Khajanchi. His *Lalita Ragini* is here illustrated. A comparison of this *Ragamala* with that painted at Chawand some twenty years earlier, admirably demonstrates the nature of the impact which final submission to the Mughals made on the Mewar artist. It has been shown in the last chapter that about 1610 illustrated manuscripts began to appear in Mughal style of texts and subjects which would have made a more immediate appeal to a Hindu patron. The paintings that have survived show this work at several levels. There are what may be called Mughal paintings but by artists out of the main stream. Their style is that of the last years of Akbar's reign, and they are already a decade or so out of date. This sort of painting was probably done for those maharajas who were closely associated with the imperial court and aped their master's taste with such artists as were not employed in the ateliers of the emperor and the great Mughal nobles. Jahangir would no doubt have considered this fair journeyman's work but old-fashioned and pedestrian. Some of the painting of this type seems to have been done at Agra. In other paintings however the native vision is evident, partially adjusting to its own ideas of picture-making the realistic intention of the Mughal. The resulting gaucheries liven the heavy imitation of the first type. In some again the native hand has completely reasserted itself. The Mughal's treatment of natural forms, perspective and recession have been assimilated and immediately converted into colour and design to be used for purely pictorial and emotive ends. These pictures, one feels, Jahangir would hardly have recognized as painting at all. This is an interesting artistic phenomenon, and one which will no doubt seem more complex as further documents

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come to light. For the Indian was not reducing with more or less success the range and complexity of a great court art to his simpler formal needs. On the contrary he was reasserting his vision on a style to which he had made a contribution at its inception, and it is significant that it was the Akbar style he adapted to his needs, and not at this moment the Jahangir style whose Flemish realism and finish were foreign to him and to which he had given nothing. The 1628 Udaipur *Ragamala* belongs to the third group of paintings described above. Inconceivable without Mughal example, yet it is in no sense a Mughal picture. Its intention is still that of the Chawand set: it is merely more accomplished. The Mughal influence, not felt in any sense directly, for Mewar was not closely associated with the court, had refined the drawing, enriched the palette and in some respects amplified the design, but the core of the style remains Indian. This distinction between "Indian" and "Mughal" may seem artificial, but it must be made. The Mughals were foreign conquerors. Akbar and Jahangir did not perhaps see India and Indians as Babur did from the height of his Persian culture, but even their paternalism and interests were rooted in arrogance. They knew, one feels, as much about India as the best type of English administrator did in the nineteenth century. That is, they found much to admire and catch their interest, they adapted food and clothes to suit the climate, admitted the old ruling class to bed and even to board, but did not really belong. They could not become one with the Indian without being assimilated, and thus cease to be conquerors. The Rajputs were different. They were Indian. All the aspects of Indian life and culture were theirs already, not to be learned. The countryside and its activities were real and close to the small simple courts. Like the English country gentleman of the eighteenth century they knew their fields and trees, in Trollope's tender phrase, like a woman knows the ornaments on her mantelpiece. We are used to the spectacle of a rootless modern generation overwhelmed by a foreign culture. But the influence of Mughal art was not radical. The Rajput took what he wanted and adapted it to his own steady taste.

We do not meet with dated examples of Mewar painting again until the end of Jagat Singh's reign. No doubt painting continued, and output increased. A specially fine series in the collection of Gopi Krishna Kanoria illustrating *Nayaka-Nayika* themes, a catalogue of the various types of lovers and their temperaments, may be dated about 1630. Freer and more lyrical, it follows nevertheless the style of Sahibdin's *Ragamala*. Indeed his is the personality which bridges the gap. In 1648 he painted a *Bhagavata Purana*, now in the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute at Poona, in 1652 the Sixth Book *(Yuddha-Kanda)* of the *Ramayana*, now in the British Museum, and in 1655 the *Sukar Kshetra Mahatmya*, now in the Sarasvati Bhandar, Udaipur. The intervening period has changed his style little, but in the detailed compositions of his later books can be seen his more ambitious work on a larger canvas. He is at his best in scenes where the design is held together by a forest backcloth, in which the natural forms of Mughal painting have been adapted to create an ideal landscape of richly diversified and glowing texture. His handling of groups has a fine, strong sweep, in which the great variety of Mewar textile designs, which obviously delighted him, is used with telling effect. Manohar, a Hindu artist, who illustrated in 1649 the First Book *(Bala-Kanda)* of the *Ramayana*,

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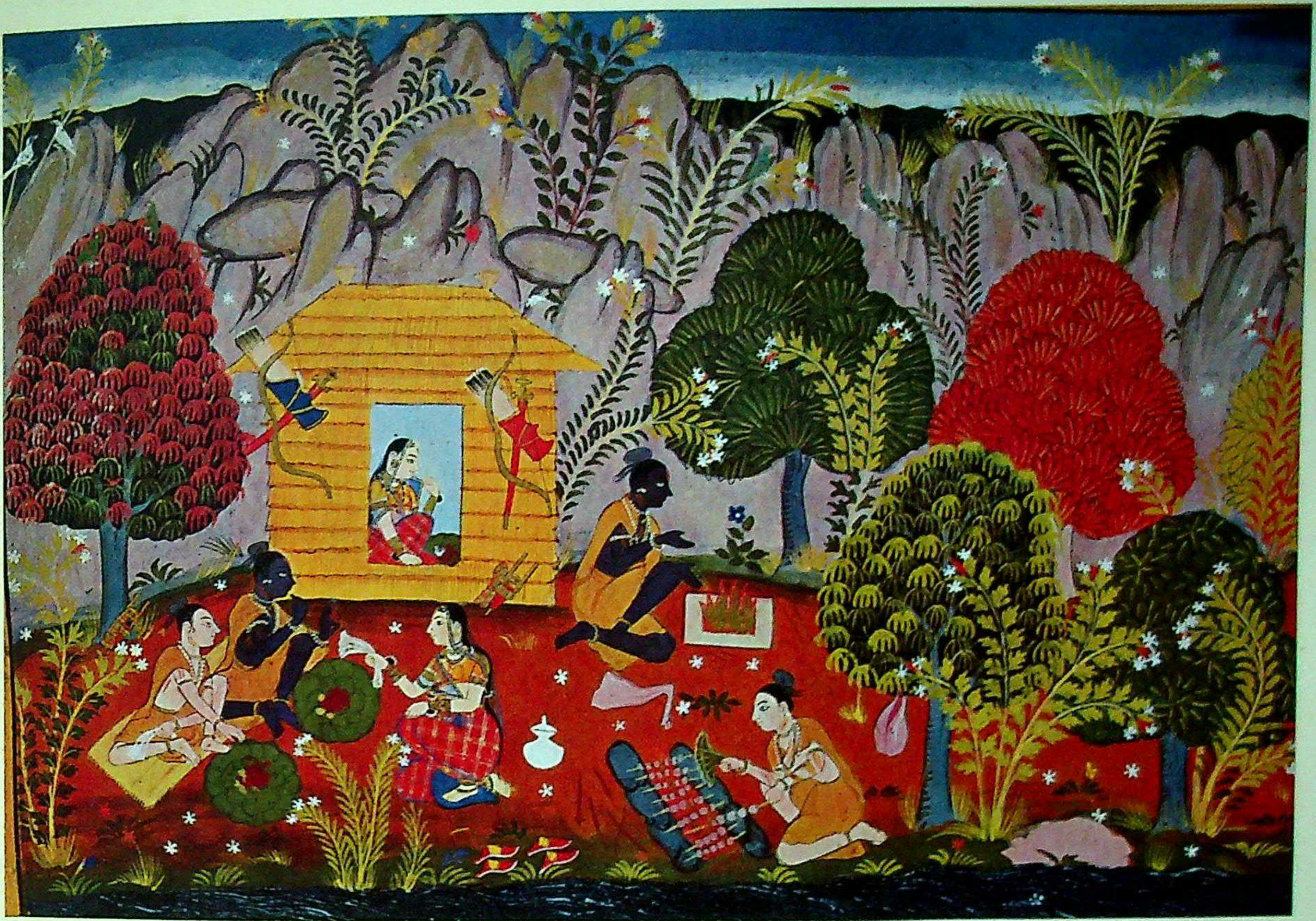
the majority of whose pages is in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, is less interesting. He is an indifferent draughtsman, and seems unable to knit his crowded scenes into any sort of design, stringing out his long lines of figures in the feeblest fashion. There is, in fact, a wide difference among scholars as to the aesthetic merit of the vast quantities of paintings which have survived from this period. Professor Goetz finds them "conventionalized and mannered, over-elaborate, rather crude in execution, petty and neurasthenic." W. G. Archer, on the other hand, has seen in this painting "a style of virile intensity, characterized by glowing passionate colour, deft rhythm and robust simplifications." The fact is that the paintings of this period are very unequal in quality. Unfortunately the work of one particularly coarse hand which employed a virulent palette, has been frequently used to illustrate seventeenth century Mewar painting at its finest and most characteristic. This hand was responsible for the illustrations to the Third Book *(Aranya-Kanda)* of the *Ramayana* dated 1651, now in the Sarasvati Bhandar, Udaipur, the Seventh Book *(Uttara-Kanda)* of the *Ramayana* dated 1653, now in the British Museum, the so-called Gem Palace *Ragamala* in the National Museum, New Delhi, and a *Sur-Sagar*, the intensely devotional poems of Surdas, the blind poet of Agra, who lived in the first half of the sixteenth century. There is however little doubt that this prolific hack, whose work has given Mewar painting a bad name, was in fact a contemporary of Sahibdin and the more accomplished masters. The three decades from 1630 to 1660 saw Mewar's contribution to Rajasthan painting of the seventeenth century. Routine copying of the favourite texts prolongs this style into the next century. The treatment is sometimes a little more finished, often slick, as in the contemporary Mughal painting. The texture loses its earlier richness, and the imagery loses its freshness and invention. Occasionally the style was genuinely felt, as in several pages of a First Book of the *Ramayana* dated 1712 in the British Museum.

Mewar has been the first Rajasthan school to be described for two reasons. We possess a large body of painting which is dated and of which we know the exact provenance, Chawand, Udaipur and Chitor. Equally important is the fact, if the account given here is correct, that in Mewar we can trace a continuous tradition from the *Chaurapanchasika* style of about 1500 into the early seventeenth century, so that we can see clearly the nature of the Mughal influence and what it had to work upon. This seems to be possible only in Mewar. No painting at the moment can be attributed to the other sixteenth century Rajput courts to indicate whether they too shared in the *Chaurapanchasika* style or employed some variant of it. In quality and originality however seventeenth century Mewar yields place to the small state of Bundi.

The territory of Bundi in the sixteenth century was enclosed by Jaipur to the north and by Mewar to the west. Until the first quarter of the seventeenth century it included also Kotah, but when that state became independent, Bundi's eastern boundary was formed by the valley of the Chambal. The present small town sheltering beneath its hill castle and the surrounding country, hilly and thickly forested, is of a spectacular beauty. The Hara chiefs of Bundi belonged to the clan of the Chauhan Rajputs, whose original home was at Sambhar near Ajmer. Like the Sisodiyas they were thus descended



Ramayana: Detail from a page of the Second Book (Ayodhya-Kanda).
Mewar School, Style of Sahibdin, dated 1650. Add. 15 296, folio 71 recto, British Museum, London.

from one of the great dynasties of classical India: it was Prithvi Raj Chauhan who died fighting Muhammad Ghor in 1192 during the Muslim invasion. The Haras migrated to Bundi, and in the middle of the fourteenth century founded a new state, named after their family, Haraoti. Though often at war with Mewar and Malwa, the Hara chiefs were vassals of Mewar, with whom they were connected by marriage. Rao Surjan, who came to the throne in 1554, obtained Ranthambor, the powerful fortress between Bundi and Bharatpur, as fief from Mewar. Akbar was quick to realize that the pacification of Rajasthan was impossible without the possession of Ranthambor. This was cleverly arranged by Bhagwandas and Man Singh of Amber, and from now on Bundi threw in its lot with the Mughals. In the early seventeenth century Rao Ratna Singh (1607-1631) gave Kotah and its dependencies to his son Madhava Singh in *jagir*. Both father and son aided the imperial army against Prince Khurram during his revolt against Jahangir. In return Madhava Singh received his *jagir* direct from the crown, and the territory of Haraoti was now permanently divided into the states of Bundi and Kotah. Satrusal (1631-1658), though he and his family had supported Jahangir, was pardoned by Khurram, who, as the emperor Shah Jahan, made him governor of Delhi.

Though one may speak with some confidence of a Bundi school during the seventeenth century, it must be admitted at the outset that, though there exists a small group of three dated pictures, there are none on which a provenance is explicitly stated. Nor is it possible to distinguish the work of Bundi from that of Kotah at this period, or indeed to insist that the Bundi style was not current at several other small courts in south-east Rajasthan. The title "Bundi School" must be accepted with these reservations. Two paintings have fairly been attributed by Pramod Chandra to the reign of Rao Ratna Singh who received many titles and favours from Jahangir. They are a Illustration page 143 *Dipak Raga*, in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, and a *Bhairavi Ragini*, in the Municipal Museum, Allahabad. Both pictures, from the same *Ragamala* series, are of great beauty. Certain elements in Mughal painting of the late Akbar period have taken the artist's fancy, with the result that his treatment of natural forms is more precise and careful, though never allowed to qualify the intention of his design. His figures, both men and women, have an archaic look, reminiscent of the Chawand *Ragamala* but quite distinctive. The palette is of a depth and brilliance not to be found at Mewar, but not unlike that of Deccan painting. It is perhaps not without significance that Rao Ratna Singh had been appointed governor of Burhanpur during the Deccan wars. These two pictures may be dated about 1625. In the collection of H. H. the Maharana of Udaipur is a portrait of Shah Jahan attended by a prince whom W. G. Archer has identified as Rao Satrusal. This identification has been doubted, but it is supported by many touches characteristic of later Bundi painting. The influence of Muslim painting is strongly felt, as might be expected in such a subject, but perhaps it is the Deccan rather than Delhi which is responsible for it. In any case it must be admitted that this picture stands apart from the main development of Bundi painting. About 1640 was painted what is easily the finest and most ambitious of Rajasthan illustrated manuscripts of the seventeenth Illustration page 141 century, a *Bhagavata Purana*, now in the Kotah Museum. It remains unpublished and seems to have been generally accepted as a work of the Mewar school. Unaccountably, since it has little in common with the Jagat Singh style and is immeasurably superior in quality to the work of Sahibdin's atelier. Here too the influence of the Akbar school is apparent in almost every detail. It is in fact more keenly felt and for that reason more clearly understood. It was not so much adapted as reinvented by an original artist who confidently appraised his source for elements useful to his own conception of picture-making. The most remarkable thing about the best of these pictures is the bigness and strength of the design. There is also a tenderness and humour about the genre scenes, of Krishna's mischievous boyhood, for example, which take one back to the *Bhagavata Purana* of the *Chaurapanchasika* Group. It is hoped that other Bundi works on this large scale await discovery.

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Bhagavata Purana: Krishna subduing the Snake Kaliya. Bundi School, about 1640. ($13^{5}/_{8} \times 8\frac{1}{2}''$)
Kotah Museum, Kotah.

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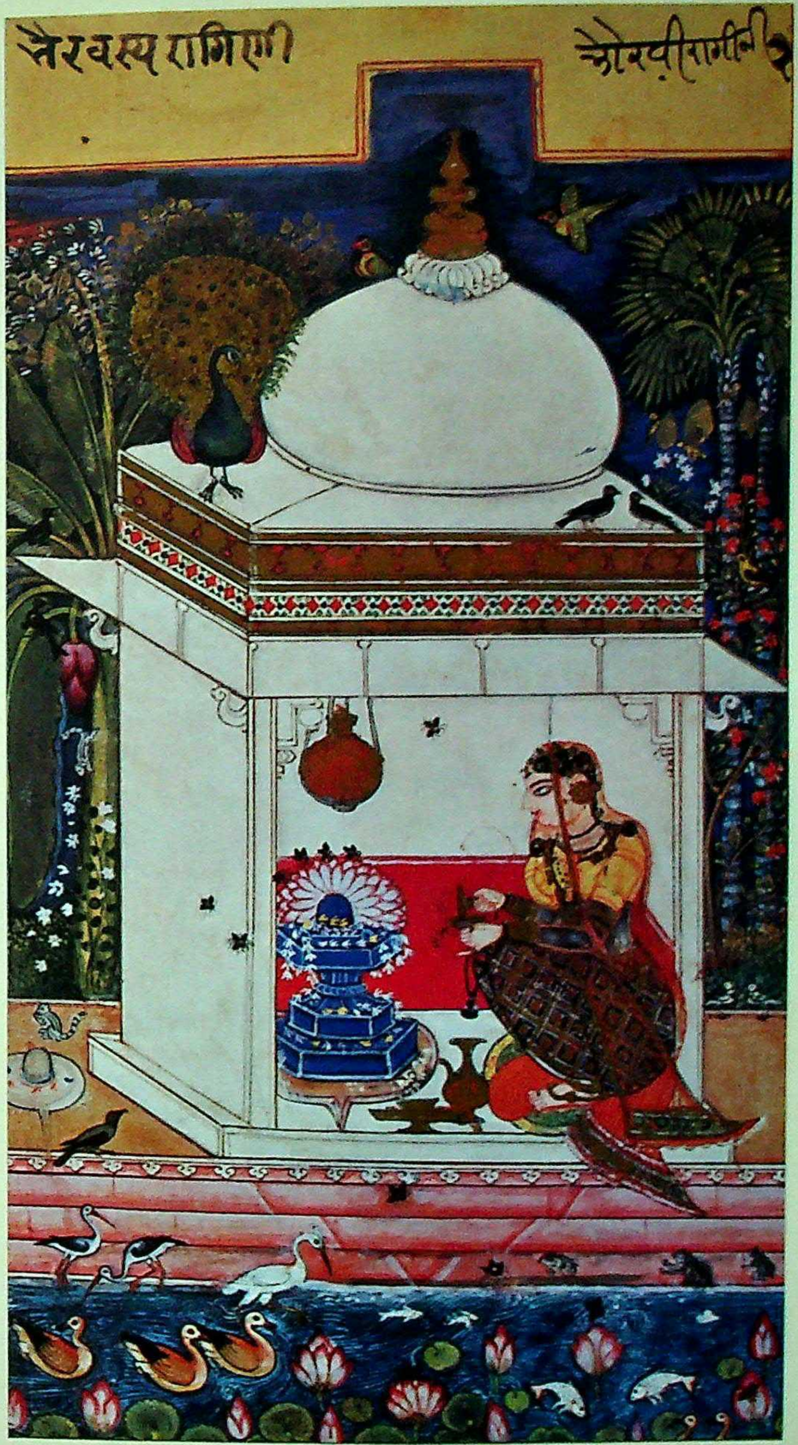
Bangala Ragini (from a Ragamala). Bundi School, about 1660. (9 × 5″) Madhuri Desai Collection, Bombay.


भैरवस्य रागिणी
भैरवी रागिनी

Bhairavi Ragini (from a Ragamala). Bundi School, about 1625. (8 ×4½″) Allahabad Museum.

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Vasanta Ragini (from a Ragamala). Bundi School, about 1660. (Miniature 8⅛ × 6¾″)
G. K. Kanoria Collection, Calcutta.

In the Kotah book the men and women of the early *Ragamala* series are replaced by more modelled and sophisticated types. The women particularly with their smooth rounded faces and small pursed mouths can immediately be recognized. The new types appear in a dispersed *Ragamala* series, of which a page in the collection of Madhuri Desai is here illustrated. This *Ragamala* is closely related to the earlier series, both in design and colour, large areas of soft white being a feature of both. The types of the protagonists only have changed, through the intervention of the artist of the *Bhagavata Purana.* This later series, which should be better known, may be dated about 1660 in the reign of Satrusal's son Rhava Singh (1658-1681). Related again, but by a different hand, is a fragmentary *Ragamala* series in the collection of Gopi Krishna Kanoria. The *Vasanta (Spring) Ragini*, in which the youthful Krishna dances to the music of two girls, is one of its finest pages. A freshly beautiful restatement of a hackneyed rhetorical metaphor, it is also highly sophisticated painting in which every element of the picture either supports or mirrors the movement of the central figure. The nervous tension of the drawing is in sharp contrast to the slacker hand of the contemporary Mewar artist. In 1682, in the reign of Aniruddha Singh (1681-1695), a picture of two lovers in a pavilion, now in the collection of C. D. Gujarati, was painted, perhaps by an artist Daudia. It is a handsome, well-composed picture, and follows directly on the style of the dispersed *Ragamala* series. It is immediately followed by a picture by the artist, Mohan, dated 1689 and now in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay. This too is in a slightly different manner but may be called Bundi in a general sense. Mohan was obviously a gifted artist. His dated picture shows two lovers standing on a stool on the first evening of the waxing moon to catch a glimpse of its rising. The rapt pair pointing at the thin crescent—Indians still regard it as a very auspicious sight—are set in a sylvan landscape of flowering trees, each with its embracing creeper. The picture conveys that peculiar stillness and warm clarity of the long Indian twilight and the early summer loveliness of the jungle. There is also a small group of paintings in the Prince of Wales Museum, showing ladies whiling away lovesick hours in Indian gardens of flowering trees and symmetrically designed water channels and fountains. They have been much admired, but are poorly composed, and lack the firm expressive drawing of the seventeenth century Bundi painting. The female figures with their rather unpleasant brick tones and vapid little faces seem to anticipate the types of the eighteenth century. There is, however, in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras, a picture in this manner, of a nobleman and his lady watching pet pigeons, which is dated 1662.

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During the seventeenth century the Bundi rulers were frequently occupied with the imperial forces in the Deccan wars, but at home all was peace and prosperity. The troubles at Delhi however which followed the death of the emperor Aurangzeb in 1707 were reflected in many of the Rajput courts. In Bundi, Aniruddha Singh's successor, Buddha Singh, was ousted from his state in 1719 by Bhim Singh of Kotah. It was not until 1748 that Buddha Singh's son, Ummed Singh, regained control with Maratha assistance. The Marathas continued to the end of the century to exercise a sort of suzerainty over Bundi and Kotah, only to be replaced by the British in the early nineteenth

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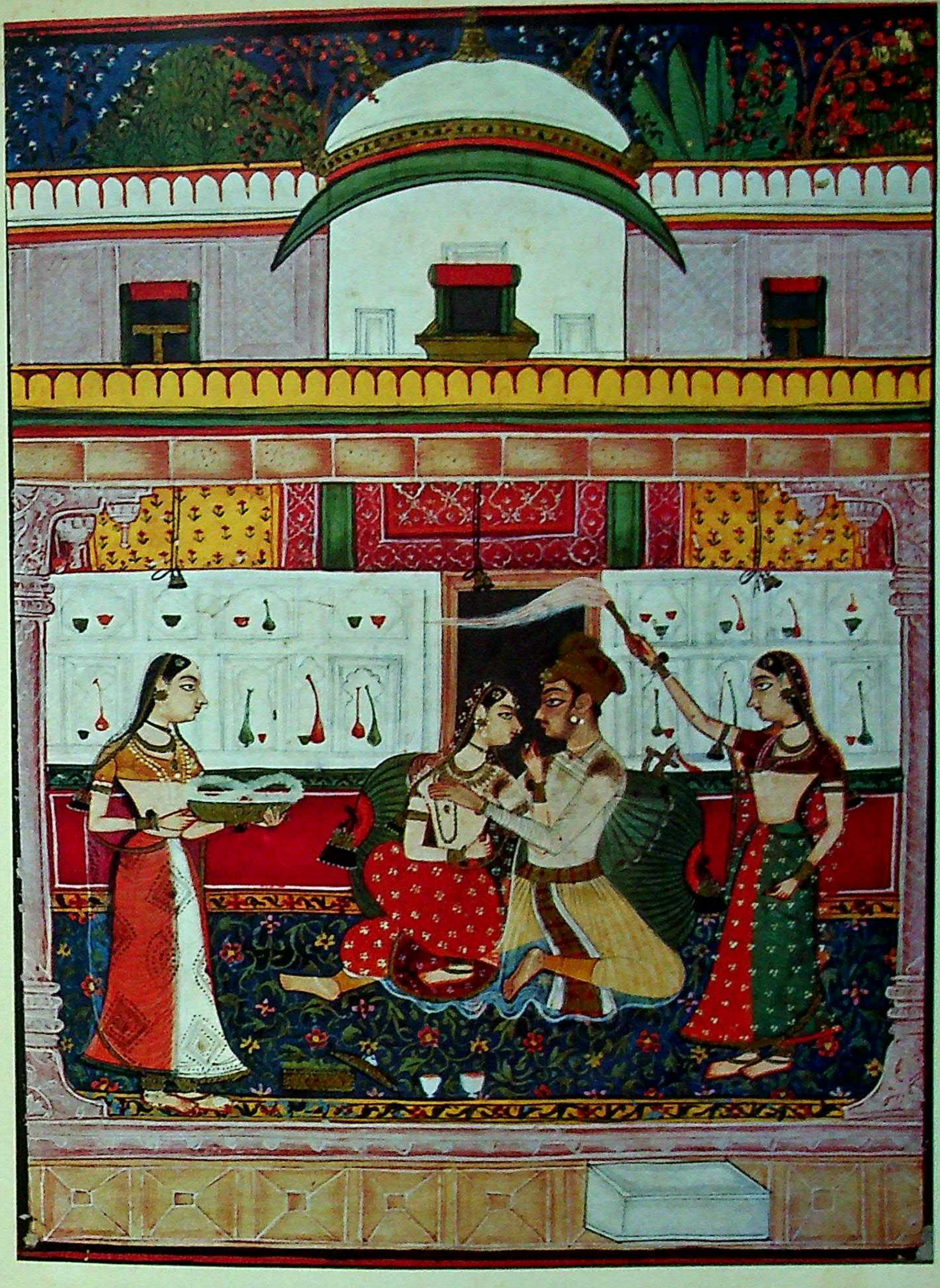
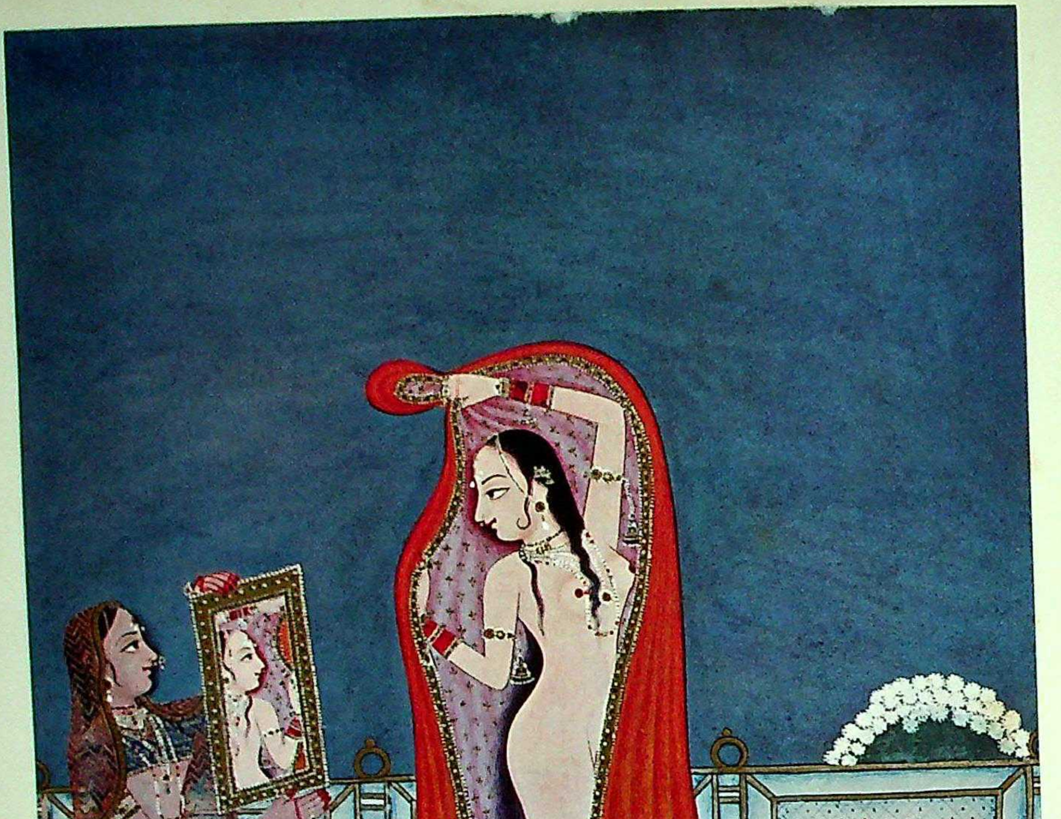
Noble and Lady watching Pigeons. Bundi School, dated 1662. (Miniature 10½ × 7½″)
Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras.



Lovers in a Pavilion. Bundi School, dated 1682. (Miniature 9¼ × 7″)
C. D. Gujarati Collection, Bombay.



After the Bath. Bundi School, about 1775. (Miniature 8⅞ × 6¼″)
Allahabad Museum.

century. Bundi painting of the eighteenth century has nevertheless a much more interesting and varied development than that of Mewar. The influence of the seventeenth century styles was felt at least as late as Buddha Singh's flight in 1719. A lovely fragmentary *Ragamala* series in the collection of Gopi Krishna Kanoria, of which the *Gauri Ragini* has frequently been published by W. G. Archer, retains all the poetic invention of the earlier pictures. A little later, perhaps about the turn of the century, is a set of *Rasikapriya* paintings, of which a page in Madhuri Desai's collection published by Pramod Chandra, is the best known. This latter, retaining in some instances the female type of the early dispersed *Ragamala* series, is the prototype of many *Rasikapriya* sets of the next ten or twenty years. The *Rasikapriya*, composed by the poet Kesavadasa at Orchha in Bundelkhand in 1591, expresses the devotee's passionate yearning for Krishna through the stock imagery of urban sexual love, the quarrels, reconciliations and raptures of the various types and temperaments of men and women. The early *Rasikapriya* matches the emotional intensity of Kesavadasa's verse. In the later series the mood is earthbound, and elegant young nobles, disguised as Krishna, play at love with ladies of pleasure acting the part of demure country girls. In spite of their undoubted charm many of these paintings suffer from a too generous use of gold and red and a greenish yellow, which gives them a sickly tone.

Painting at Bundi continued into the nineteenth century with typical hunting, palace and genre themes. A certain gaiety always gives them interest. Moreover in the last quarter of the eighteenth century the Bundi artist produced a fairly small group of paintings, trifling perhaps but quite original, the so-called "white" paintings. In these, white surfaces, an early predilection, cover more than half the picture, the rest of which, pool or trees or sky, is painted with a sombre colouring of grey, black and olive green. Against the white areas, as in a spot-light, one or two figures are placed, also painted in a low key with a few touches of red and gold. The artists were particularly fond of toilet scenes in which the ivory tones of a girl's body could be set directly against the cooler background. These youthful nudes posing with deliberate provocation before the spectator, who is sometimes represented peering from a window but is more often intended to hold the picture close to his eyes, are shown with a pleasant lubricity rare in Indian art.

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There is a third school of Rajasthan painting of the seventeenth century from which a fair body of material has survived. Some, perhaps most of it was not painted in Rajasthan in the strictest geographical sense, and this school is usually called that of Malwa or Central India. Both titles are labels only, based on the smallest evidence, but will have to serve for the time being for a style which may have been common to Southern Rajasthan, Malwa and Bundelkhand. They are, as Karl Khandalawala has emphasized, misleading only if used to suggest a development wholly independent of Rajasthan painting. There are two strands in this painting, related, it is true, but distinct. A dispersed manuscript of the *Amaru-Sataka*, the love lyrics of an early, possibly seventh century, Sanskrit poet named Amaru, is dated 1652. It seems to have been painted at a place called Nasratgadh. A dispersed *Ragamala* series, by an artist named Madhau Das, was painted in 1680 at a place called Narsyanga Sahar. Of the same date, without doubt, is an *Amaru-Sataka* in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay. Both dated series of paintings are in the same style, so close indeed that they have been confused. In the earlier series the setting is almost always architectural, and there is a particular fondness for black grounds. In the later there is more invention, and the landscape backgrounds are specially varied and romantic. The drawing however is more perfunctory. Though the clear-toned palette and female types are quite individual, these paintings are obviously of the same source and inspiration as those of contemporary Mewar and Bundi. If provincial Mughal influence is felt at all, it must have been through one of these schools, perhaps Mewar. Their provenance depends on the interpretation of the place names Nasratgadh and Narsyanga Sahar. They may be identical, and may stand for Narsinghgadh in North Malwa bordering on Southern Rajasthan. Unfortunately the town and state of Narsinghgadh seem not to have been founded before 1681 when the state of Rajgadh was divided into two owing to family feuds. However that may be, there are a few clues which throw a little light on the beginning of this style. A fragmentary *Ragamala* series in the collection of Motichand Khajanchi shows it perhaps a decade or so earlier than the 1652 *Amaru-Sataka*. A dispersed *Rasikapriya*, dated 1634, of which the colophon is in the National Museum, New Delhi, is also related, though not perhaps radically, to the later Malwa development. It is a modest production in which a few figures of heavy-chinned, scowling type are formally disposed on olive-green grounds in simple architectural settings with an even line of white to indicate the horizon. A broad yellow border at the top and bottom carries the text. Small decorative details and the placing of the figures look like reminiscences of the *Chaurapanchasika* Group. This is even more apparent in a dispersed *Ramayana* series of the same date, of which the most successful pages are in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras. Here we are face to face with a truly native strain, inconceivable without sixteenth century example. What is new in these pictures is a dramatic tension, an almost barbaric excitement due partly to the breadth and boldness of the design, partly to the splendour of the colour in which a dark chocolate plays an important role, and even more perhaps to the pure fantasy of the landscape settings. The finest example of this strand of Malwa painting is a *Ragamala* series in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras, as notable an achievement in its way and as original as the *Chaurapanchasika* Group itself. The Malwa paintings of 1652 and 1680 are no doubt related, but their demure pastorals and smiling landscapes are far removed from these wild and disturbing encounters in the imagined jungle. Something of this intensity of feeling will be experienced again in the early paintings of the Panjab Hills. But they seem so far outside the range of the seventeenth century schools of Rajasthan and their mood so remote, that their original attribution to Bundelkhand, as proposed by A.K. Coomaraswamy when he first published a quieter but related *Ragamala* series, most of whose pages are now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, may well turn out to be correct. During this period the province of Malwa was of course under a Mughal governor. Though the small Rajput courts were left undisturbed so long as they did not cause trouble, the military roads to the Deccan lay through their territory and they were open to the same influences as the courts of Rajasthan. Bundelkhand, on the other hand, played much the same role

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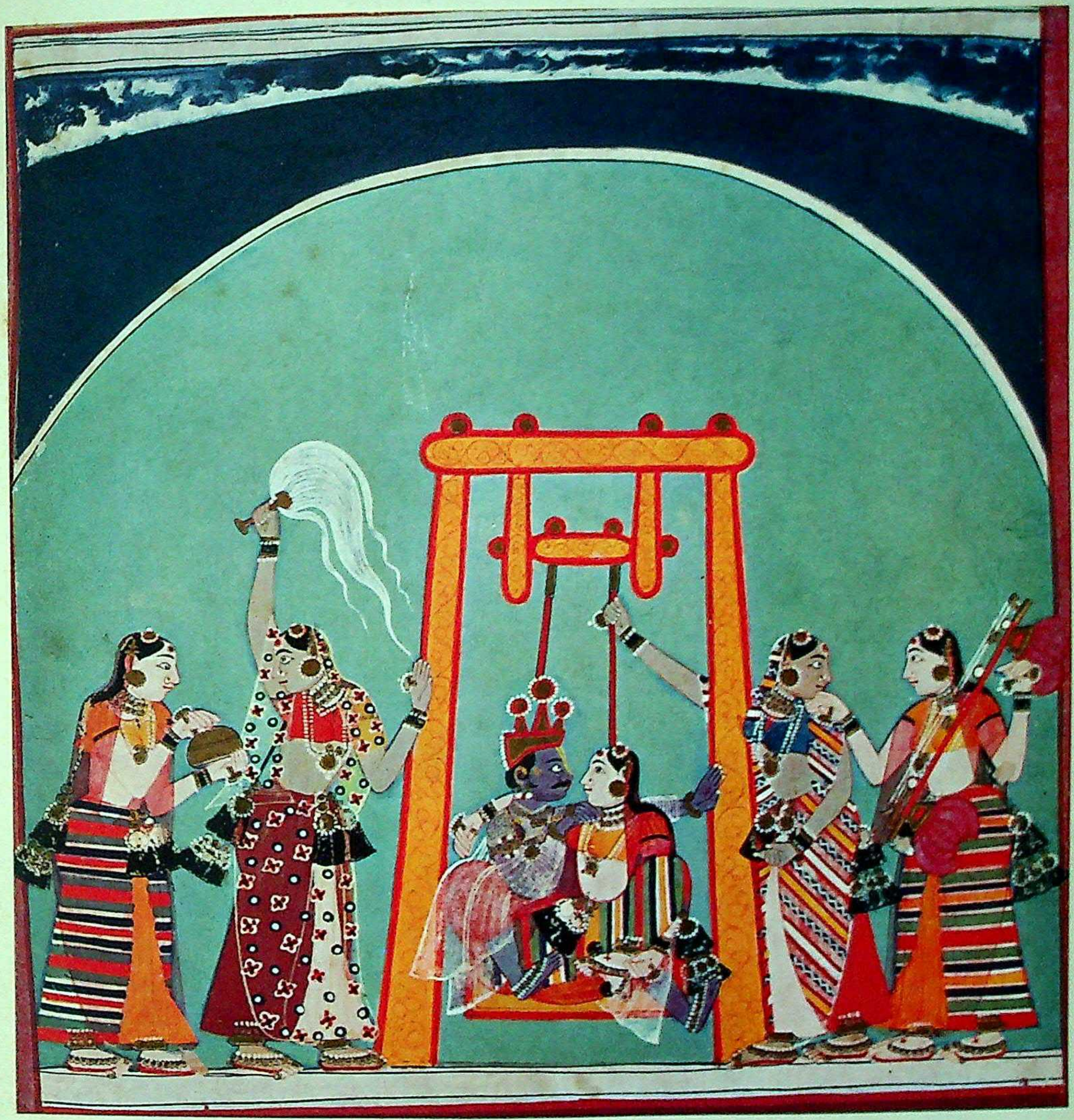

Hindola Raga (from a Ragamala). Malwa School, about 1650. (Miniature 7⅛ × 6¾")
Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras.

in the seventeenth century, and with more success, that Mewar had in the previous century. This thickly forested region, in late classical India the home of the Candella dynasty and filled with temples of which the group at Khajuraho is the best known, had been but little affected by the centuries of Muslim rule. Akbar, it is true, had taken the powerful fort of Kalinjar, but no further progress seems to have been made in the pacification of the Rajputs of eastern Bundelkhand. The chiefs of western Bundelkhand, which is separated from Malwa by the River Betwa, were more vulnerable and made their peace with Delhi. One, Bir Singh Deo, enjoyed the favour of Jahangir, having planned the murder of Abu'l Fazl, Akbar's minister and historian, for him when Prince Salim. Installed as raja by Jahangir on his accession, he controlled from his great palace-forts at Orchha and Datia the whole of western Bundelkhand. His successor, Jhujhar Singh (1627-1635), rebelled against Shah Jahan and was defeated and killed. It was now left to Champat Rai who was ruling eastern Bundelkhand. His successor, Jhujhar Singh (1627-1635), rebelled against Shah Jahan and was did so successfully that when he died in 1661, his more famous son, Chhatarsal, was able to extend his territory as far as Gwalior and eastern Malwa. When Chhatarsal himself died about 1734 after an exceptionally long reign, even the emperor had officially recognized his power. It was perhaps in one of the fortress towns of Bundelkhand that this more original "Malwa" painting was produced. It is not without interest that a *Ramayana* series in the National Museum, New Delhi, in a style similar to that of the Boston *Ragamala*, bears Bundelkhandi inscriptions. The style continues to the end of the century, a *Bhagavata Purana* in the collection of Gopi Krishna Kanoria being dated 1688. Though falling far short of the Banaras *Ragamala*, the style remains vivacious and decorative.

In this chapter emphasis had been placed on native tradition and little attention, too little in the opinion of many students of this period, given to Mughal influence at the Rajput courts. By Mughal influence, it should be emphasized, is meant not Mughal inspired costume or accessories but Mughal style. Some support is given to the point of view adopted here by the recent publication of a dated series of paintings from Jodhpur. The house of Jodhpur, or Marwar, head of the Rathor clan of Rajputs, has as ancient a history as the Sisodiyas of Mewar. The state was founded in the early thirteenth century with the capital at Mandor, later, in 1459, removed to Jodhpur. Though often at war with the other Rajput states, Jodhpur fought alongside Rana Sanga at the Battle of Khanua. It was under Rao Maldeo (1532-1569), the most powerful prince in Hindustan in the opinion of the Muslim historian Ferishta, that Jodhpur was attacked by Akbar, who seized the forts at Merta and Nagaur but made little impression on the Rathor who refused to come to court. His successors however submitted. Udai Singh, on his accession in 1581, gave his sister Jodh Bai to Akbar. In return all his possessions, except Ajmer, were returned to him. He obtained the title of raja and several districts in Malwa. Sur Singh (1595-1620) and Gaj Singh (1620-1638) served the Mughal with distinction in Gujarat and the Deccan: the latter was made viceroy of the Deccan. It may be assumed that such provincial Mughal painting as was available at the court could have been examined and acquired by the Rathor rajas, if it attracted them. In 1623 a *Ragamala* series in the collection of

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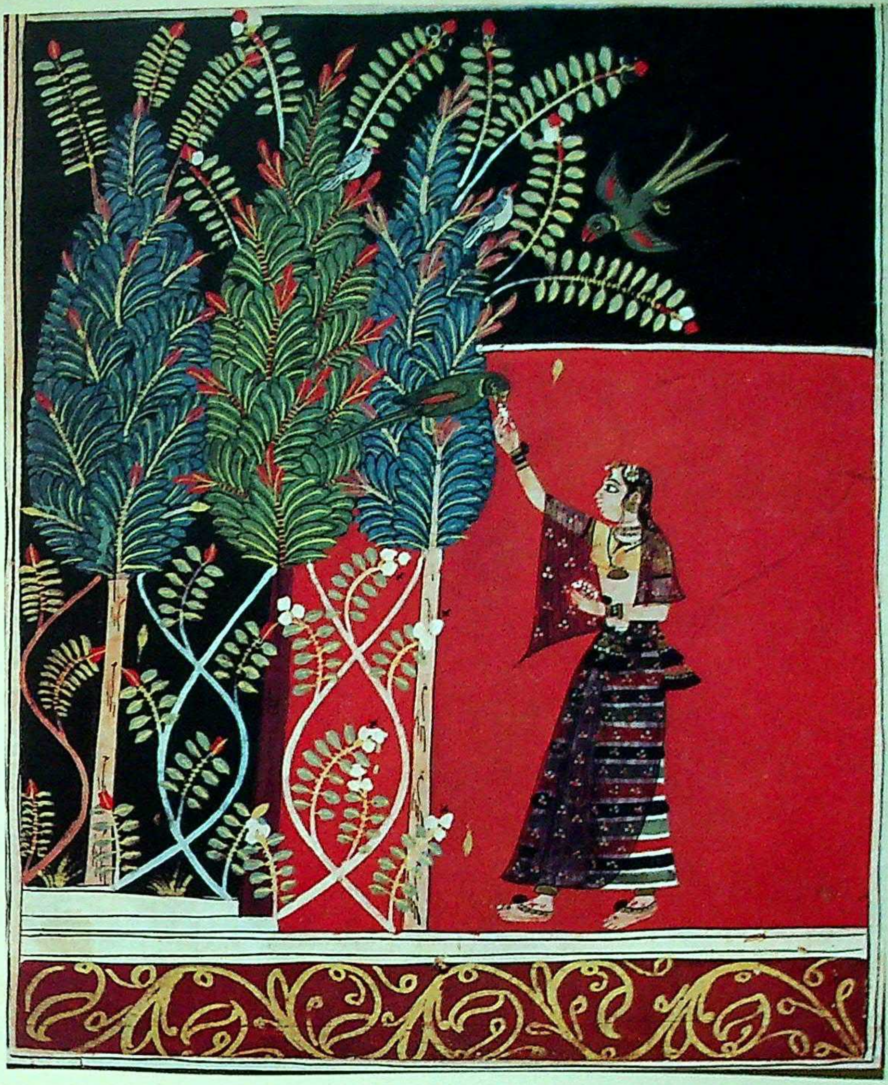
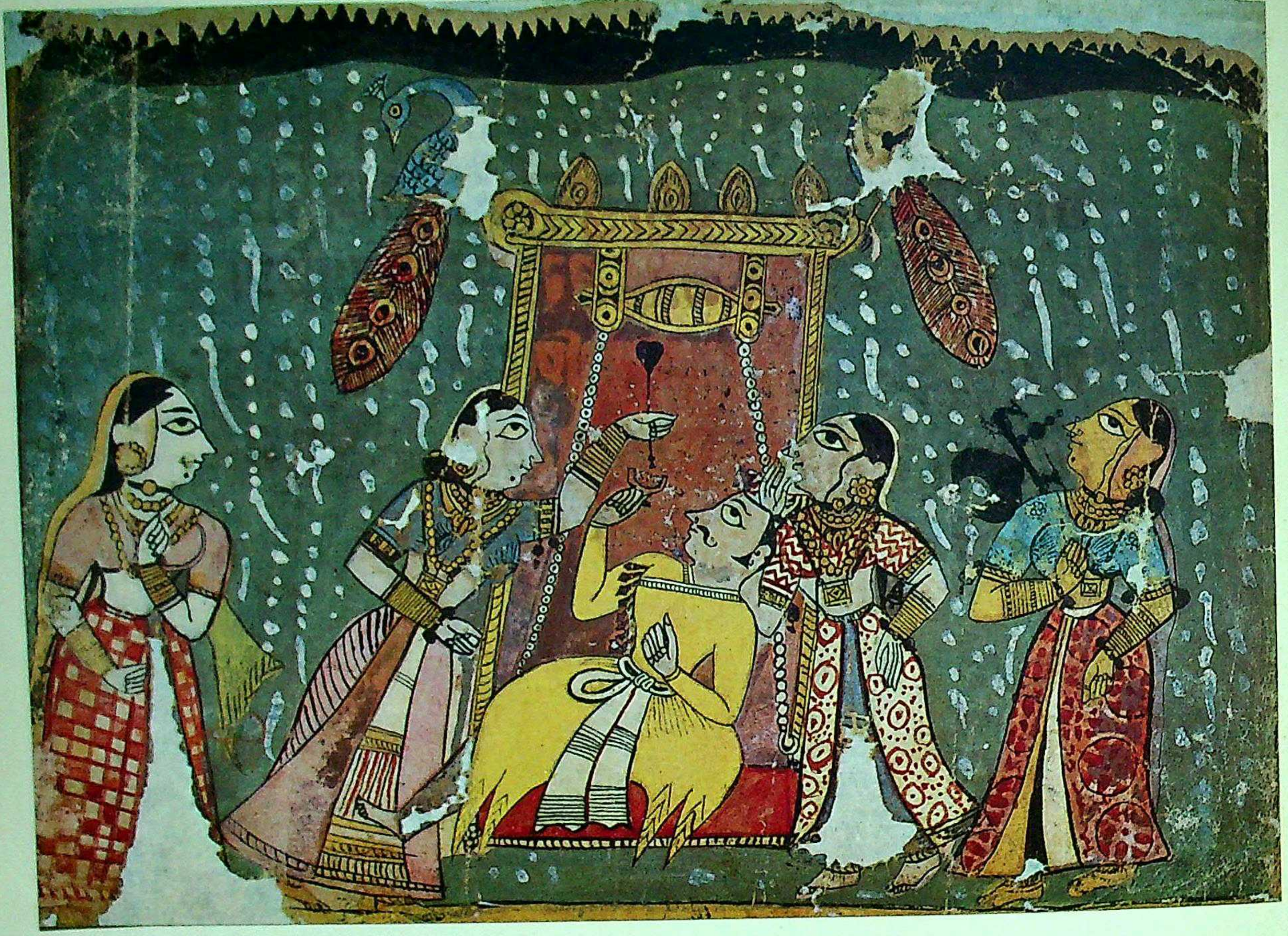


Gauri Ragini (from a Ragamala). Malwa School, about 1680. (Miniature 6⅛ × 5⅝″)
Jagdish Mittal Collection, Hyderabad.

Kumar Sangram Singh, was illustrated by an artist named Virji at Pali, an important fief of Mewar, in the reign of Bithal Das, who attended the imperial court with Gaj Singh. This delightful series, of which the *Hindola Raga* is here illustrated, is completely unaffected by the Mughal style. These simple but by no means artless drawings are set down without fumbling. There is no sign of an uneasy shifting of taste. It is difficult to believe that they were not following a tradition current in the sixteenth century in the desert region. Nor does this *Ragamala* stand alone: a manuscript in the Motichand Khajanchi Collection in the same style is dated 1634.



Hindola Raga (from a Ragamala), painted by Virji. Marwar School, Pali 1623. (5⅝ × 8″)
Kumar Sangram Singh Collection, Jaipur.

In the second half of the seventeenth century however patronage at Delhi began to decline, especially during the reign of the austere and bigoted Aurangzeb (1658-1707). Those Rajput chiefs who were closely associated with the imperial court seem to have induced many of the unemployed Mughal artists to enter their own service. Some of the Rajput courts, Amber in particular, had already in the earlier part of the century given a limited patronage to those artists not required in the imperial ateliers. Now they were able to employ the best exponents of the contemporary Mughal style. Bikaner is a good example of a state whose taste was almost, but not quite, submerged by the close association of its rulers with the Muslim courts. Bikaner was founded in 1485 by a Rathor prince from Jodhpur. As early as 1544 its ruler, Kalyan Singh, had sided with

Sher Shah against the parent state. Kalyan Singh waited on Akbar in 1570 and gave his daughter in marriage. His son Rai Singh (1571-1611), the first raja of Bikaner, was one of Akbar's most distinguished soldiers, and of Hindu rulers second only to Amber in the list of commanders *(mansabdars)*. His successors, of whom the two most important were Karan Singh (1631-1669) and Anup Singh (1669-1698), continued to serve the Mughals in North India and the Deccan. About 1650 Ali Raza, "the *ustad* (master) of Delhi," painted a dream of Karan Singh, in which he had had a vision of the god Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi. At first glance this picture, now in the Motichand Khajanchi Collection, is merely a good example of the late Shah Jahan style: decorative, of superlative craftsmanship and negligible content. Something however, in the subject perhaps or in the local atmosphere, gives it the edge over the thing it was copying. The green and mauve grounds pull the picture together, so that the design is a little stronger than it would have been in the original, and the symmetrically grouped women adoring the god have a sort of wistful prettiness outside the Mughal range of taste. Several families of Muslim artists were working alongside Ali Raza, more often on subjects, pretty girls and such, more suitable to their style. The work of one artist, Ruknuddin, who was working in the third quarter of the century, is represented in the collections of the Lallbagh Palace at Bikaner. To his son, Shahadin, is attributed one of the finest and most elaborate of Bikaner paintings, now in the British Museum, showing Krishna holding up Mount Govardhan as protection for his people against the storms of the god Indra. It derives most of its qualities, fine drawing and colour, landscape and rustic detail, not from Delhi but from late seventeenth century painting at Golconda in the Deccan. This influence was due to Anup Singh's long periods of service in the Deccan, where he acquired, as has been shown in the previous chapter, the famous portrait of Ibrahim II of Bijapur and several examples of the sixteenth century Deccan *Ragamala* series. Indeed the British Museum picture quotes several passages from a fine painting in the G. W. Gemmel Collection, which is said to have been bought at Golconda and may once have been in the Bikaner collection.

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Bikaner painting only just escapes being Mughal or Deccan, and for that reason is specially offensive to some eyes. In another small court the same set of circumstances produced by a minor miracle the most important school of eighteenth century Rajasthan painting. Kishangadh, which lies between Amber (Jaipur) and Ajmer, was founded by Kishan Singh (1609-1615), a son of Raja Udai Singh of Jodhpur. He went to court and was given a fairly high command by Jahangir. He started to build the town and fort of Kishangadh which lie near the Gundalao Lake which features so often in the later paintings. The state prospered during the seventeenth century, Rup Singh (1644-1658) being a favourite of Shah Jahan, for whom he did good service in Afghanistan. Nothing is known of the painting of this period. In the first half of the eighteenth century the state was ruled by Raj Singh (1706-1748). His eldest son, Savant Singh, born in 1699, is the personality around whom Kishangadh painting centres. In his youth he hunted and soldiered like any other Rajput noble, giving active support to the cause of the emperor Farrukhsiyar (1713-1719) and gaining favour at court. In his twenties he began

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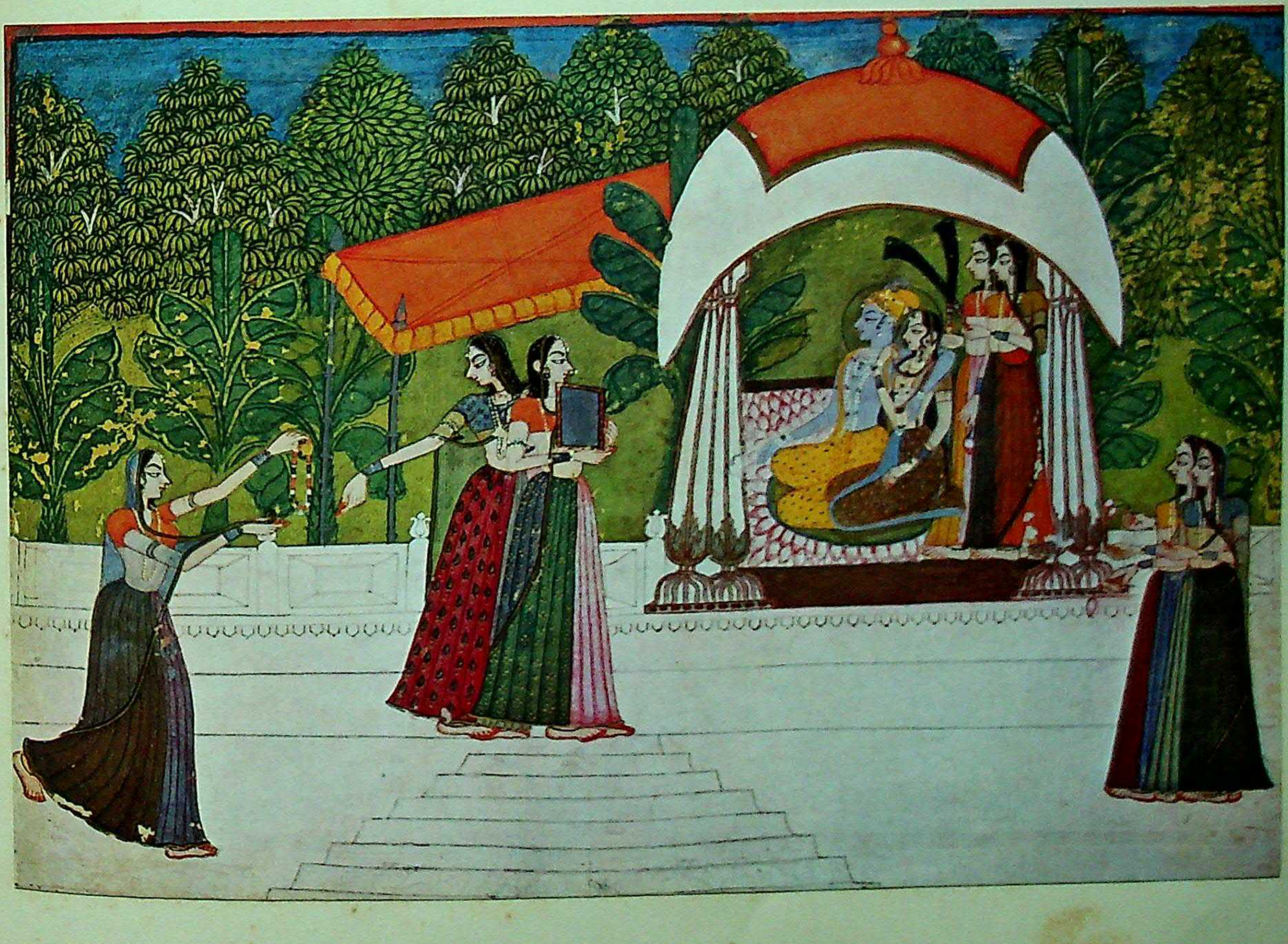
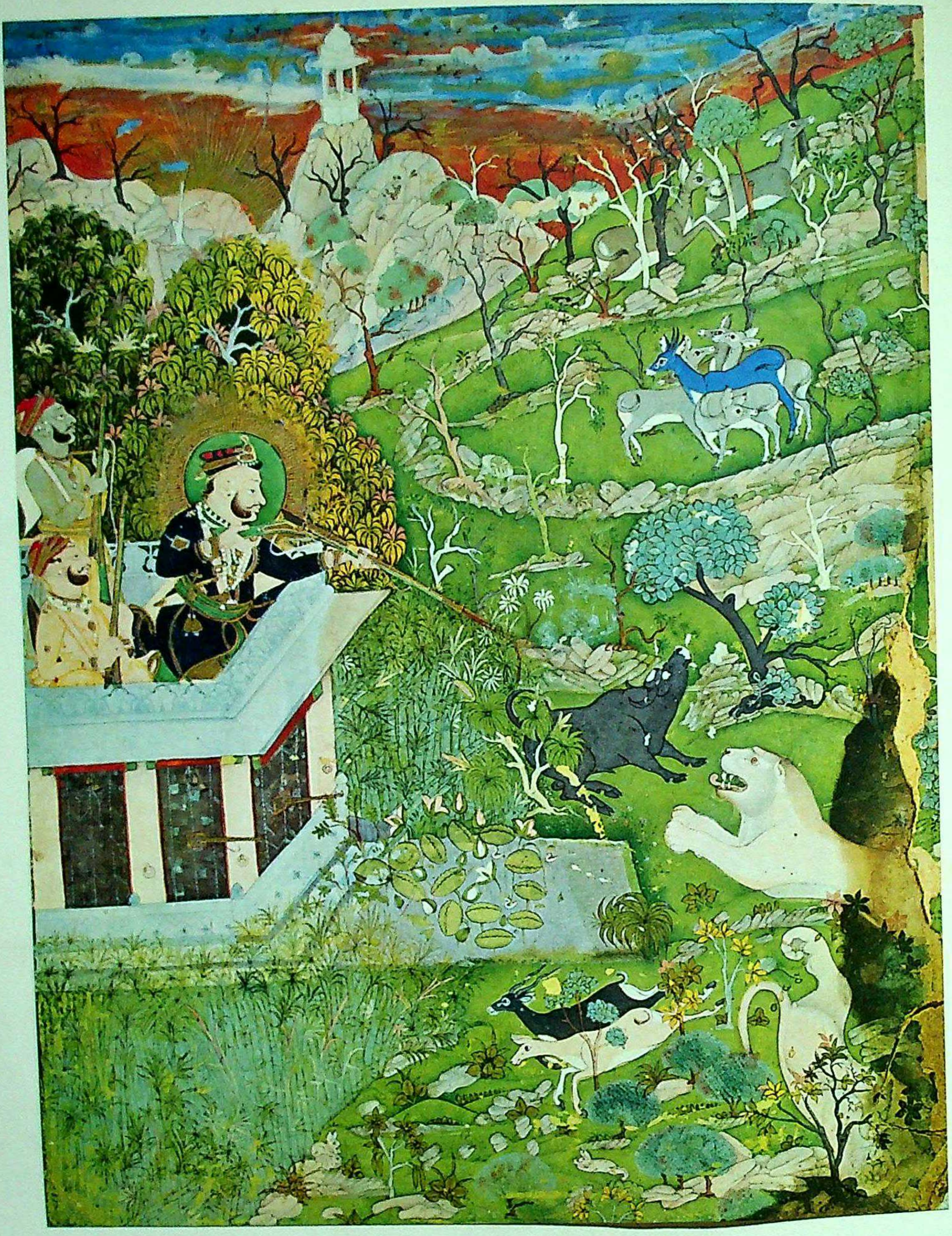
Krishna Supporting Mount Govardhan, painted by Shahadin. Bikaner School, about 1690. (8⅜ × 11¾″) 1960-7-16-016, British Museum, London.

to write poetry under the name of Nagari Das, devotional verse in praise of Krishna and Brindaban, the native fields of the Cowherd God. He was already about thirty-five when he fell in love with a talented and lovely young singer in his stepmother's employ. She became his mistress, though exactly when is not clear, and was celebrated in his verse under the name of Bani-Thani, the Bewitching Lady of Fashion. Their devotion was mutual and lasting. Savant Singh succeeded his father in 1748, and after a troubled reign abdicated in 1757 to spend his remaining years at Brindaban in the worship of Krishna. He died in 1764 and Bani-Thani one year later. There seems little doubt that Savant Singh's identification of the two passions of his life was responsible for the small but magnificent group of pictures painted at Kishangadh between the early years of his love affair and his abdication. The source upon which his artists drew was, to say the least, unpromising: the style of the Mughal court in the reigns of Farrukhsiyar and Muhammad Shah (1719-1748), a style where brilliant technique was used for the cold, glossy portrayal of court dignitaries and desirable women. Savant Singh was however fortunate. He had as head of his atelier one outstanding artist, Nihal Chand, whose portrait we possess. Though he commanded every trick of Mughal technique and presentation, Nihal Chand was able to create a perfect visual image of his master's lyrical passion. The secret of his success is twofold. He invented a new and very beautiful type for the divine lovers, Radha and Krishna. It was perhaps based on the features of Bani-

Illustration below

Krishna and Radha in a Pavilion. Kishangadh School, about 1750. (9⅛ × 13⅜″)
Allahabad Museum.





Raja Ram Singh II at a Shoot. Kotah School, about 1830. (Miniature 12⅜ × 9⅜″)
G. K. Kanoria Collection, Calcutta.

Thani herself; though idealized it has the feel of an individual experience. Even more important is the sense of scale he is able to convey in his designs. This is specially evident in his three or four masterpieces in the collection of the Kishangadh Darbar, all of which are reproduced in colour in Karl Khandalawala's important monograph on the school, and is largely due to his retention of the firm clear geometry of Rajasthan painting which underlies the compositions no matter how elaborated. In contrast his figures are quite small: the divine lovers have, as it were, to be looked for on the large grey oblongs of water or in the white latticework of ogival parterres. This adds to the feeling of mystery and private enchantment. Nihal Chand seems to have survived his master. His great style did not, though it left its impress on Kishangadh painting for the rest of the century.

The general decline of Rajasthan painting in the second half of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century is relieved by the work of the Kotah artists, novel in style and character and first appreciated by W. G. Archer. Kotah, as has already been said, became independent of Bundi early in the seventeenth century. It is probable that during the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century she shared in one of the varieties of "Bundi" painting, but of this there is as yet no satisfactory evidence. The picture changes suddenly in the reign of Ummed Singh (1771-1819), a *roi fainéant* in the hands of a powerful and able regent, Zalim Singh. With Ummed Singh and the regent hunting, especially the royal sport of tiger-hunting, was, to judge from the pictures of the period, an obsession. It was performed with the gravity and social ritual which accompanied fox-hunting in eighteenth century England. Even the women of the zenana were ordered out of doors to handle the matchlock: they are often portrayed doing so with an expert and dedicated air. In some curious way this passion—for it was nothing less—was communicated to the artists. Hunting had frequently been the subject of Mughal and Rajasthan painting, but as the record of a notable kill or daring exploit in the field. Here the subject is really the hilly jungle around Kotah, untamed and thick with bamboo. The hunters are often reduced to a head peering intently through the leaves. It is sometimes objected that there is in India no landscape painting in the European sense, that is, where the portrait of a few square miles of home country becomes a symbol of universal nature. Kotah painting is of this kind. Moreover no painters have given as much of the excitement of moonlit nights in the silent jungle and of what Corbett called the terrible, sweet smell of the tiger. W. G. Archer has compared the formal language of the Kotah artists with that of the Douanier Rousseau. The jungles of both are dangerous places, but the men of Kotah were at home in theirs. Under Ram Singh II (1828-1866) what had formerly the air of a ritual becomes a sport. The hunters occupy more of the picture. The jungle and its animals are drawn with a soft and delicate naturalism, and we are, so to speak, quite safe with the artist in the high shooting-box beyond the reach of either.

Illustration page 158

THE SCHOOLS OF THE PANJAB HILLS

SEVENTEENTH TO NINETEENTH CENTURY

The courts of Rajasthan did not cease to patronize painting in the eighteenth century. Production seems rather to have increased. Mewar, Bundi and Malwa continued to paint competent and decorative pictures. Jodhpur produced some quite distinguished portraiture. Even the poorest and most isolated courts, Alwar or Jaisalmer for example, employed a few painters, and made a small but not wholly negligible contribution. But it is clear that by the beginning of the eighteenth century the artistic vitality of Rajasthan, nourished by three generations of comparative security and a partial revival of influence and self-confidence, was slackening. The political situation was also unfavourable. With the death of Aurangzeb the influence of the Mughal Empire began to decline rapidly, and North India was soon to become a cockpit for the contending ambitions of the Afghans and the Marathas. In a few states, like Kishangadh and Kotah, where a patron had some private passion or obsession, the painters still had something to say. Otherwise interest shifts northwards to the Panjab Hills, the mountain region watered by the five rivers of the Panjab.

From the valley of the Indus to the springs of the Ganges the outer ranges of the Panjab Himalayas were, like Rajasthan, divided among numerous small states, each under its own hereditary chieftain. Some were of recent foundation, of the fifteenth or sixteenth century, others dated from the early centuries of the Christian era, a few were still older. These states may conveniently be divided into four groups, lying for the most part in the river valleys and separated by the mountain ranges. Kashmir and its old dependencies between the Indus and the Chenab have little part to play in the development of Hill painting. Between the Chenab and the Ravi is the region of Dugar (Jammu) which comprises several small states, Jammu itself, Basohli, Jasrota and Mankot. To the east between the Ravi and the Sutlej lies Trigarta (Kangra), including Kangra, Guler, Chamba, Mandi, Nurpur and the Kulu Valley. To the south-east lie Bilaspur and, beyond Simla, Tehri-Garhwal. In the classical period the Hill region had a long and important history. The monuments of Kashmir, Kangra, Kulu and Chamba show that individual styles of architecture and sculpture were developed by prosperous societies in the security of the mountain valleys. The Muslim invasions had little effect on the region. Kangra Fort, the famous stronghold of the Hills, was captured by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1009. It was quickly retaken and, with the exception of Kashmir and its dependencies, the Hill States remained independent until the Mughal period. Their history was determined by the nature of their isolated and inaccessible land. Too poor to catch the eye of their more powerful neighbours, they occupied themselves, as far as one can judge from very meagre evidence, with hunting and continuous quarrelling with their neighbours. This seems to have had little effect on the political situation within the Hill States. The mountain barriers formed natural boundaries. A strong ruler might conquer or absorb his weaker neighbours. They in their turn used every opportunity to regain their independence. Since all were related by marriage and other family ties and all were Hindu, the changes in suzerain or territory were of small significance.

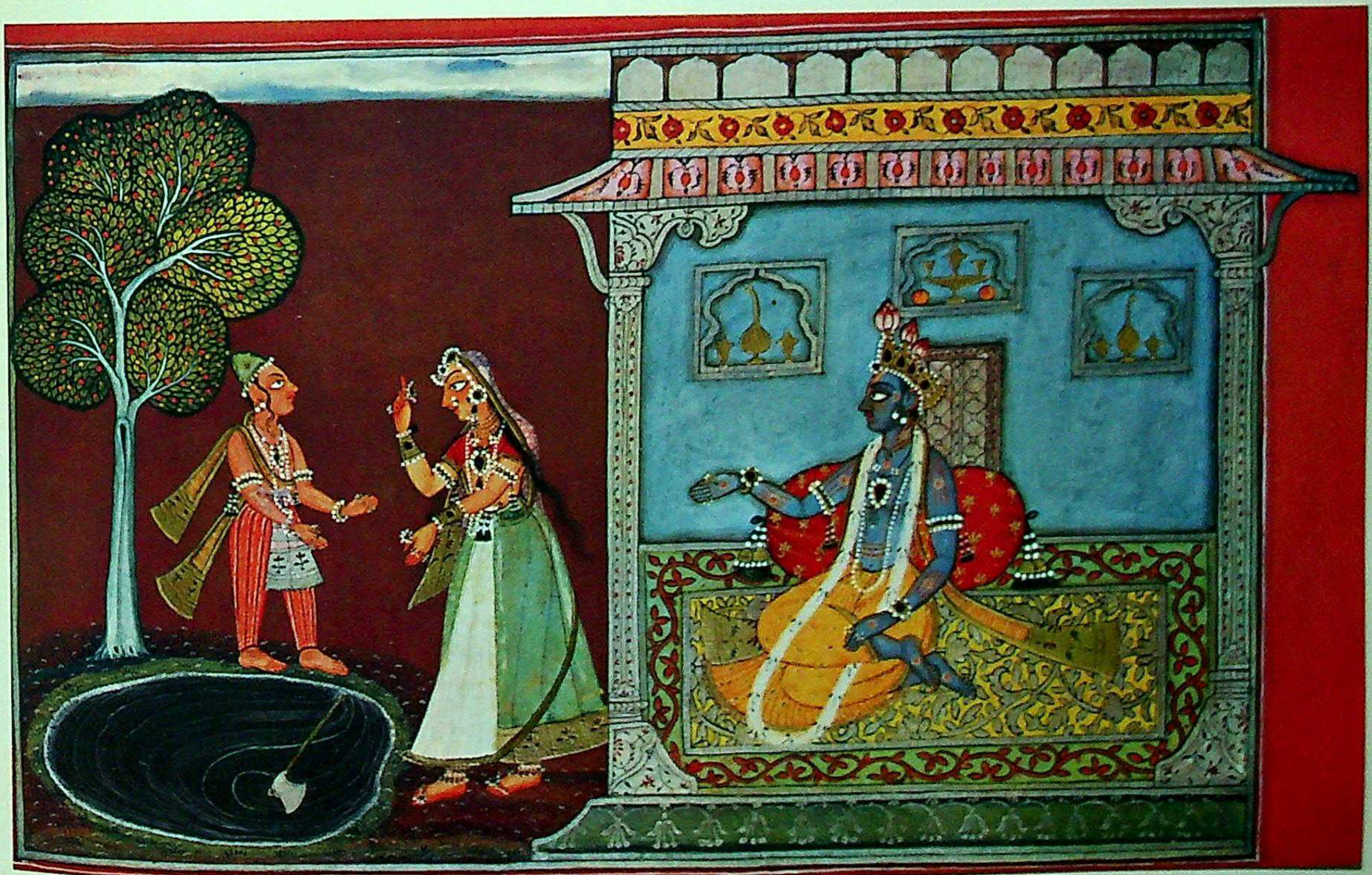
The Mughals however swiftly imposed upon the Hill chieftains such control as was considered necessary. Quite early in Akbar's reign all the Hill States became tributary to the Empire. The most fertile part of the valley of Kangra and of many other states was confiscated and formed into a royal demesne. As Akbar's administrator reported, he had "cut off the meat and left the bone." There were revolts, and the imperial forces had to range the hills from Jammu to Kangra. To ensure good behaviour Akbar began to retain at the court as hostages the heirs or near relatives of the Hill chiefs. It is said that at the beginning of Jahangir's reign there were twenty-two young princes *(mian)* at Delhi. In 1620 the Kangra Fort was taken after a long siege, and remained a Mughal garrison town until 1783. In spite of these checks to their freedom the Hill chieftains were not much disturbed by the imperial suzerainty. They were in fact treated generously by the Mughals. There was no interference with their administration of their states, and they continued to make war on each other, indifferent to the Mughal governor in Kangra Fort, except occasionally to ask him for help. There was in addition much friendly intercourse between the Hill chieftains and Delhi, and exchange of letters and valuable presents. Several chieftains entered the imperial service and gained high commands and distinctions. Even the leaders of dangerous revolts, like Jagat Singh of Nurpur in 1641-1642, were pardoned and all their privileges restored. Under Aurangzeb relations were not so happy, and many of the Hill rajas openly defied his religious edicts.

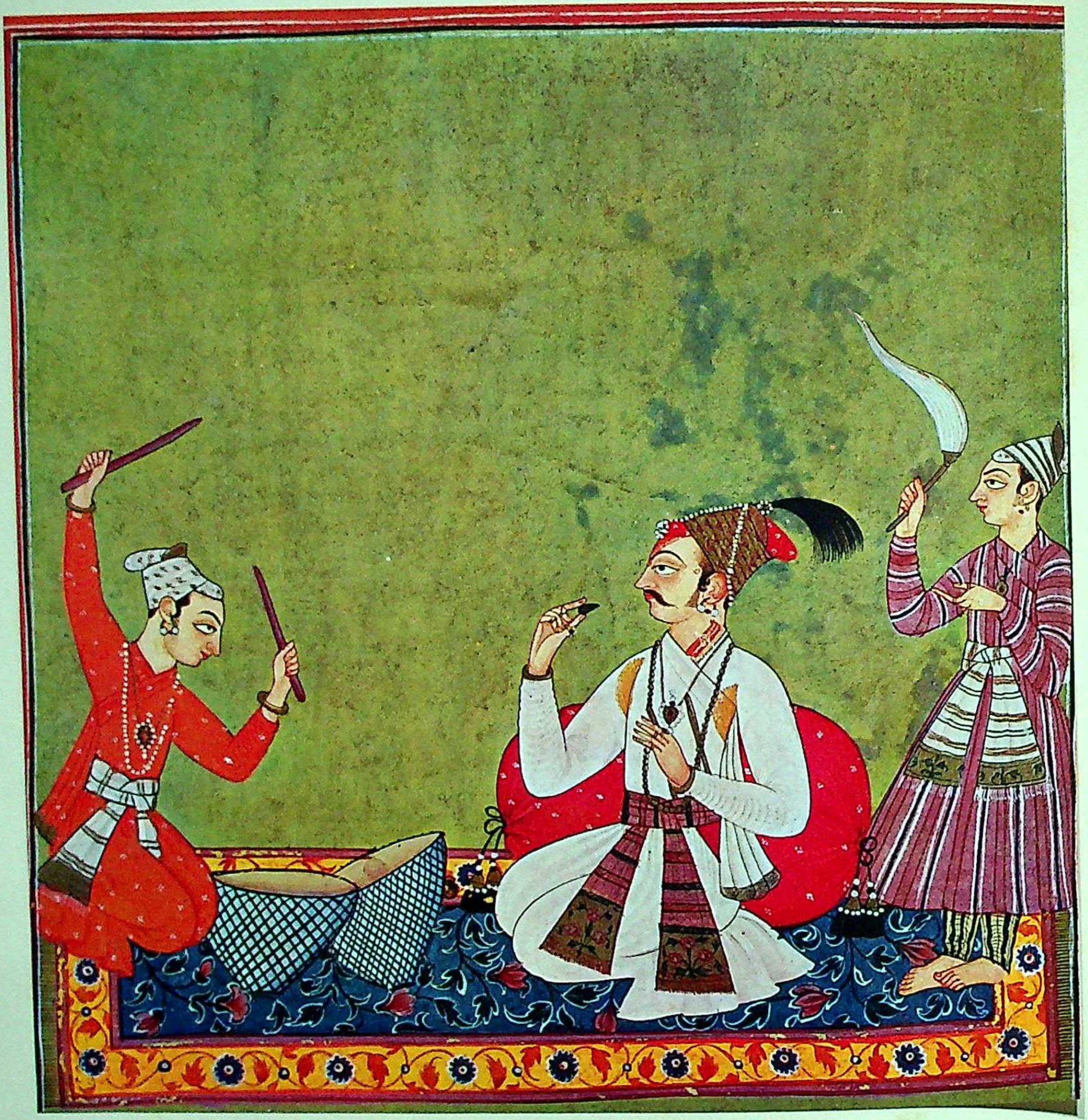
From the small group of Buddhist miniatures of the tenth century, mentioned in an earlier chapter, to a manuscript painted at Basohli in the last decade of the seventeenth century, there is not a single piece of real evidence to indicate the survival of a tradition of painting in the Hill region. Basohli was an ancient state. Its original capital, Balor, which is probably as old as the eighth century, lies twelve miles to the west of the present town of Basohli, founded in 1630 near the right bank of the Ravi. Its seventeenth century history was specially turbulent with assaults on the independence of its neighbours and a bitter and protracted feud with the state of Nurpur, involving intrigue and assassination at the imperial court. In 1694-1695 a dispersed manuscript of the *Rasamanjari*, of which the colophon is in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras, was painted by the artist Devidasa for Raja Kirpal Pal, who ruled from 1678 to 1694 or 1695. The *Rasamanjari*, a fifteenth century Sanskrit work of the poet Bhanudatta, is one of the most important of the erotic treatises devoted to an elaborate systematization of the Nayaka-Nayika (Hero and

Heroine) theme. Numerous pages of at least one other illustrated manuscript of the *Rasamanjari*, in the same style perhaps but certainly by a different hand, are divided between the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. A page from this manuscript is here illustrated as a superb and characteristic example of this style. These pictures, indeed the style generally, for the quality is uniformly high, make the same impact as the Bharat Kala Bhavan "Malwa" *Ragamala*. Both are obviously the products of a mannered and sophisticated court. Both are the expression of a fierce and disturbing vitality. Within the broad red borders, on hot orange, yellow and brown grounds, the lovers appraise each other with large devouring eyes, the women as predatory and demanding as the men, not at all the docile creatures of the verse they illustrate. The colour is magnificent and puts life into every picture of the period no matter how modest. The design is simple; a division of the pictures into two fields

Illustration below

Page from the Rasamanjari of the Poet Bhanudatta. Basohli Style, about 1690. (Miniature 8 × 11¼")
Victoria and Albert Museum, London.





Hill Chief and Drummer. Basohli Style, about 1720. (Miniature 7 × 6⅜″)
Allahabad Museum.

of colour by a turret or pavilion, and landscape a few lovely conventions for flowering trees and creepers. In contrast the lovers are superbly tricked out, and use is made of the fine cloths and carpets of the period to give variety to the texture. One small technical device was successfully used on the jewellery worn by the lovers, the application of dark green beetle's wings to simulate emeralds.

The dated *Rasamanjari* is the only group of pictures in this style which can be associated beyond doubt with a definite ruler and state. It is not known whether the style took its origin from Basohli or whether it was shared with other, perhaps many, Hill states. There is no obvious reason why Basohli, which enjoyed no sort of political or cultural pre-eminence in the Hills at this period, should have invented the style. It lasted, as we shall see, at least to the middle of the eighteenth century, and the pictures can be put into some sort of chronological sequence if it is assumed that they were painted at one main centre. If several centres are postulated and a decision has to be made which was the leading exponent of the style and which were the followers, the problem becomes much more difficult. Many centres have in fact been suggested, not only in the immediate vicinity of Basohli, such as Jasrota, Mankot, Bandhralta and Jammu, but further afield across the River Ravi at Nurpur, Chamba, Kangra and Kulu. These attributions are based on portraits of local rulers in "Basohli" style or on the collections of local descendants of the princely families. It is hardly necessary to say that both have to be treated with caution as evidence. More particularly the latter, since most of the Hill chieftains were related by marriage and women must often have taken their collections of pictures with them when they went to their husband's state. Moreover these collections are authenticated by tradition and hearsay: they have no history in the proper sense. On the other hand within the "Basohli" style there are several clearly distinguishable manners, and it is not easy to believe that so many variants of the style survive from one state only. No doubt the "Basohli" style in one form or another was the common property of at least the Jammu region, and perhaps of the Panjab Hills generally. But speculation in this direction seems profitless until fresh evidence is available. It is best to follow Karl Khandalawala and to use the term "Basohli Style" to cover the early phase of Hill painting up to the middle of the eighteenth century, so long as it is understood that Basohli's role in the invention and development of the style is hypothetical.

The origin of the school provides an even greater problem. At Basohli at least it may be assumed that painting began fairly soon after Kirpal Pal's accession in 1678. The earliest looking group of pictures, whether painted at Basohli or not, is the *Rasamanjari* divided between Boston and London, but this would take the style back no more than a decade or so. Nor are these in any sense primitives: the style is already completely formed. Since there is no earlier evidence in the Hills, most scholars have looked for the source of the Basohli style in the two places where painting is known to have been practised, Rajasthan and the Mughal court. Certainly the Hill Rajas had plenty of opportunity, at least up to the early years of Aurangzeb's reign, to see Mughal paintings at the court. The architecture and costume of the Basohli paintings suggest a familiarity with Mughal fashions, and even perhaps, in such details as the use of shading, with

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Krishna and Maidens. Basohli Style, about 1710. (7½ × 7")
1955-10-8-069, British Museum, London.

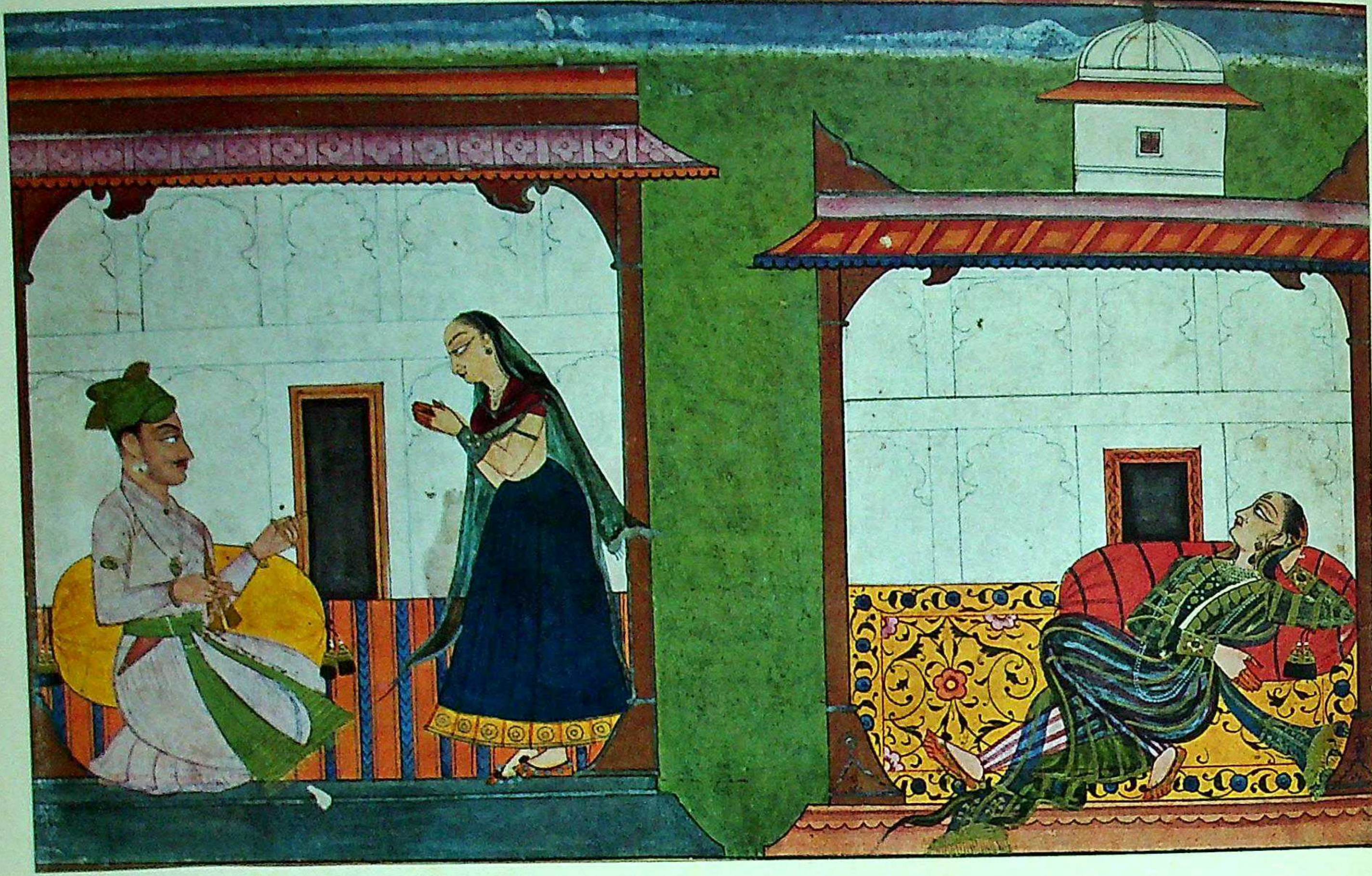
actual Mughal style. As patronage declined at Delhi artists may have been induced to go to the Hills as they were to Rajasthan. But this would not help to explain the startling originality of the Basohli style, though it might explain the sudden abundance of painting. A similar emigration of Mewar or Malwa artists—there is no evidence of either—would not make the picture any clearer. Comparison with Delhi and Rajasthan does underline the comparatively late date of the Basohli style as we know it. Of its origin nothing useful can be said on the available evidence except perhaps to suggest that its uniqueness and quality presuppose a strong tradition, at present unknown to us, in the Hills themselves.

With the turn of the century the intensity of the two early *Rasamanjari* manuscripts diminishes. The passionate mood is still there, but everything is taken more quietly. The line loses its harshness and becomes smoother and more flowing. The palette is a little cooler, though it retains its brilliancy. One of the finest examples of Basohli painting at this stage is the *Krishna and Maidens* in the British Museum. *Ragamala* sets were also popular. The *Vinoda Raga*, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the *Saveri Ragini* in the Metropolitan Museum, of the same style as the *Krishna and Maidens*, are particularly lovely. An extensive *Ragamala* set, now dispersed, shows this style at a much lower level of achievement. A little later again is another *Rasamanjari* series, the bulk of which is in the collection of Kasturbhai Lalbhai. Though the iconography closely follows that of the earlier sets, the style is quite individual with its sober palette, dull red, grey and sage-green predominating, and women with high round foreheads. The attribution of these pictures to Nurpur by M. S. Randhawa and W. G. Archer on the basis of a local collection may be considered premature, but they certainly stand apart from the main stream of Basohli painting. The figures especially seem to look forward to the new developments in Hill painting which occur about the middle of the century. Roughly contemporary is a *Gita Govinda* manuscript, most of whose pages are divided between the Lahore Museum and the National Museum, New Delhi. It is dated 1730 and seems to have been commissioned by a lady named Manaku. There is little feeling in these pictures and no movement, but the grouping and colour in the best of them are magnificent. Before a dark backcloth lit by glimmering trees and a thin line of white sky the figures of Krishna and his lovers pose and cluster with grave, intent faces, as if arrested in the performance of some elaborate masque. The muted landscape and the glint of the dark green beetles' wings give an air of evening to the most successful pages. This manuscript has been accepted as Basohli in the strict sense even by those who believe that the Basohli style was employed in some form by the Hill region generally. Its development from such works as the *Krishna and Maidens* or even from the Kasturbhai Lalbhai *Rasamanjari* manuscript, if this is accepted as Basohli, is not obvious. However that may be, a less finished but more vivacious version of the style is used in a slightly later picture, in the collection of the late N. C. Mehta, of the child Krishna and his companions stealing milk while his foster mother's back is turned. The subject is treated with a moving innocence and tenderness. The composition is carefully planned, the rectangular frame broken by the curving tail and body of the monkey, and the pyramid of children, the mother's back and leaning milk churn balanced by the uprights of the narrow door.

Illustration page 166

Illustration page 168

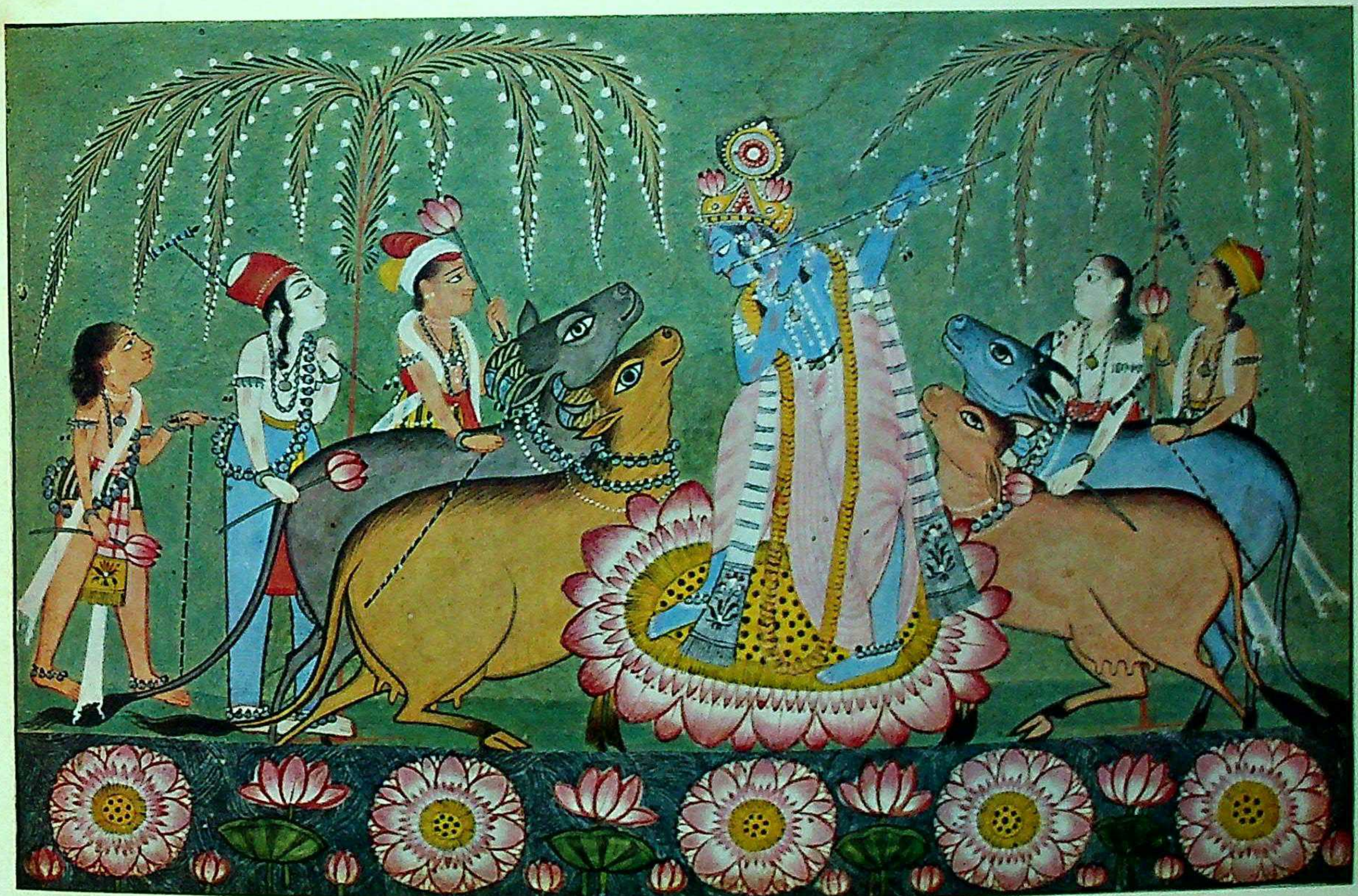
Illustration page 170

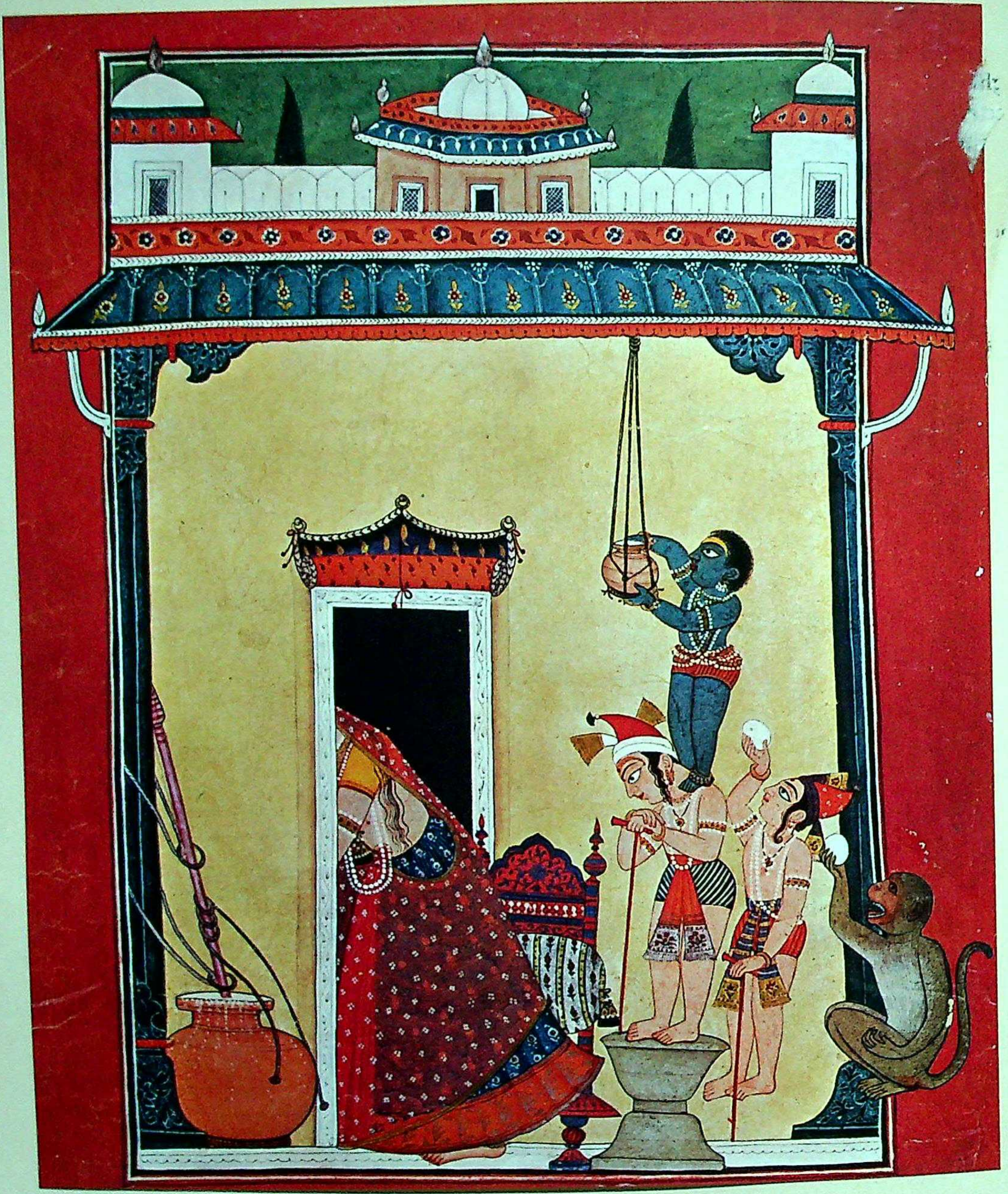


Page from the Rasamanjari of the Poet Bhanudatta. Basohli Style, about 1720. (6¾ × 10⅞″)
1961-2-11-02, British Museum, London.

It has already been said that several groups of pictures have been referred to other centres on the basis of local collections. M. S. Randhawa, in his admirable exploration of the local Hill collections, has gone perhaps further in this direction than most students would care to follow. Nevertheless his discovery of distinctive versions of the Basohli style in the collections of Raja Dhrub Dev Chand of Lambagraon in the Kangra Valley and of Raja Raghbir Singh of Shangri in the Kulu Valley is not without significance. A *Ramayana* series in the latter collection belongs to a style already well-known in museums and private collections. A good example of it is a picture (in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) of Krishna charming the cowherds and their cattle with his flute-playing. Illustration page 169 The heavy country faces, the reduction of texture to pattern and the careless construction give these pictures, attractive as they are, a provincial look. The remote and lovely valley of Kulu, lying to the east of Kangra and Mandi, was, after Kashmir and Kangra, the most ancient state in the Hills. At its most prosperous and powerful under Man Singh (1688-1719), it remained strong enough during the eighteenth century to interfere in the affairs of its neighbours, especially Mandi. A group of *Ramayana* paintings in the National Museum, New Delhi, in an idiom similar to that of the Shangri *Ramayana*, is said to bear an inscription giving Mandi as the place of painting and the date 1765. The Basohli type paintings of the Lambagraon Collection, closely related to the *Krishna stealing Milk*, have been accepted as local products even by such a sceptic as Karl Khandalawala, who places them in the reign of Ghamand Chand (1751-1774). If these dates are correct, we may see the Basohli style surviving in the remoter states into the third quarter of the eighteenth century, and in small out of the way places even later, by which time the richer states closer to the Plains and more accessible to the influences of the outside world had changed their style radically.

Krishna with his Flute. Basohli Style (possibly Kulu Valley), about 1740. (6½ × 9½")
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.





Krishna stealing Milk. Basohli Style (possibly Kangra), about 1750. (8⅞ × 6″)
No. 85, N.C. Mehta Collection, Bombay.

Illustration page 164

The Hill chief was fond of having his likeness painted. Posed in simple white garments against a green or yellow ground with the broad-striped Hill carpet and flowered rug to lig en the picture, these formidable, hawk-profiled princes smoking their hookah and ac npanied by favourite dog or falcon, were eminently suited to the style of their pai ers. A contemporary portrait of Kirpal Pal of Basohli fortunately survives in the ollection of Karl Khandalawala.

Aurangzeb's interminable and abortive campaigns in the Deccan, which occupied most of his reign, had exhausted the resources of the Mughal Empire and loosened her control over the outlying provinces in Northern India. This did not escape the notice of the neighbouring powers, Persia and Afghanistan, and, in India itself, the Marathas. The death of Aurangzeb in 1707 was followed by dynastic quarrels, and in 1739, in the reign of Muhammad Shah, by the large scale raid into Northern India by Nadir Shah of Persia and the sack of the capital itself. The ensuing struggle for real power in the empire by the Afghans and Marathas brought about a state of complete anarchy. In 1752 the official dismemberment of the empire began, when the province of the Panjab was ceded to the Afghan king, Ahmad Shah Durani, by his namesake in Delhi. With the Panjab went the Hill States. Kashmir came directly under Afghan rule but the Dugar (Jammu) and Trigarta (Kangra) Groups were too remote to be more than nominally subject. Taking advantage of the general lack of control from the Plains, the Hill chiefs reassumed their independence and began to recover the tracts of land they had been forced to give up to form the Mughal demesne. The two states which profited most were Jammu and Kangra. Even under Dhrub Dev (1703-1735) Jammu had begun to assert her control over her neighbours between the Chenab and the Ravi. But Jammu's greatest Chief, a man of character and real administrative ability, was Dhrub Dev's son, Ranjit Dev, who ruled from 1735 to 1781. He extended his father's supremacy over the Dugar Chiefs to the inner mountain states of Kashtwar and Bhadrawah. His position was recognized by the Duranis, whose favour he enjoyed and to whom he gave assistance in 1762 in a punitive expedition against their governor in Kashmir. An important factor in the strength of Jammu at this period was the prosperity brought to the state by a change in the trade route from Delhi to Kashmir and the North-West Frontier Province. Previously it had run through Sirhind and Lahore. Now with the general panic and feeling of insecurity in the Plains it followed an ancient and safer Hill road through Bilaspur, Nadaun, Guler, Nurpur, Basohli, Jammu and so up to Kashmir. The merchants established branches in Jammu. Artisans and political refugees followed. All were welcomed and treated generously by Ranjit Dev. What he did for Jammu, his contemporary Ghamand Chand (1751-1774) accomplished in Kangra. He recovered all the ancestral territory taken by the Mughals with the exception of Kangra Fort, which under its indomitable governor Saif Ali Khan, one of the most remarkable of eighteenth century personalities, still took its orders direct from Delhi. In 1758 Ghamand Chand was appointed governor of the whole Trigarta region by Ahmad Shah Durani, over which he exercised control with the help of a large army of Muslim mercenaries. He founded the town of Tira-Sujanpur, just above Nadaun on the river Beas.

The panic at Delhi and in the Plains generally which accompanied Nadir Shah's sack of the capital in 1739, was followed immediately by an abrupt change in the general style of Hill painting. The new style was created by artists who had received their training in some degree in the Mughal painting of the reign of Muhammad Shah (1719-1748), and it is fair to assume that families of artists migrated in search of new patrons and more settled conditions to the comparative safety of the Hills. This change of style can be traced with certainty at two centres, both on the new trade route. One centre, Jammu, was already, under Ranjit Dev, a state of importance. The other, Guler, was politically insignificant, though not yet under the control of its neighbour, Kangra. This new departure in Hill painting may most conveniently be given the name of the Guler Style, since the whole subsequent development of Hill painting may be understood with reference to the painting of that particular state. Jammu, though politically important, seems on our present evidence to have been a slightly less developing centre: the history of its painting after 1770 is in any case obscure. The title "Guler Style" will be adopted for the middle period of Hill painting on the same principle as the "Basohli Style" was for the early period. That is to say, though we have positive evidence that there was an important school of painting at Guler, it is not suggested that Guler was the only developing centre or even the main one, though our present evidence would rather suggest the latter. Karl Khandalawala has called this middle period, which will cover the three decades or so from about 1740 to 1770, the "pre-Kangra style," the "Kangra style" being his third or final phase of Hill painting. The association of the name of the Kangra state with the middle period is perhaps unhappy. Not a single example of "pre-Kangra" painting can be attributed to Kangra during the middle period except a series of paintings dated 1769 which have quite other implications. Certainly during the reign of Ghamand Chand which roughly covers the middle period, Kangra was as important a state as Jammu, perhaps more so. No doubt many state collections, Kangra in particular, have suffered dispersal. After 1758 Guler, which is in any case less than thirty miles from Tira-Sujanpur, was officially governed by Ghamand Chand. All this is true, but the fact remains there is at the moment no evidence of painting in Kangra in this period as there is at Guler, unless it is the Basohli type painting which Karl Khandalawala himself associates with the reign of Ghamand Chand. Nor is it cause for surprise that a small state should have a flourishing and developing school of painting and its more powerful neighbour and suzerain should lag behind. In the Basohli period Basohli was relatively insignificant, and indeed controlled by Jammu under Dhrub Dev. Yet it is not suggested that as there was painting in Basohli, *a fortiori* there was painting in Jammu, though there may well have been. A developing art depends not on political power only but on enlightened and devoted patronage. What little evidence there is suggests, as we have seen, that if there was painting in Kangra before 1770 it was not of the type which is now to be discussed.

It will be best to understand the new developments at Jammu before proceeding to Guler. The most important documents of this period are two portraits, in the Central Museum, Lahore, and in the late N. C. Mehta's collection, of Ranjit Dev's youngest

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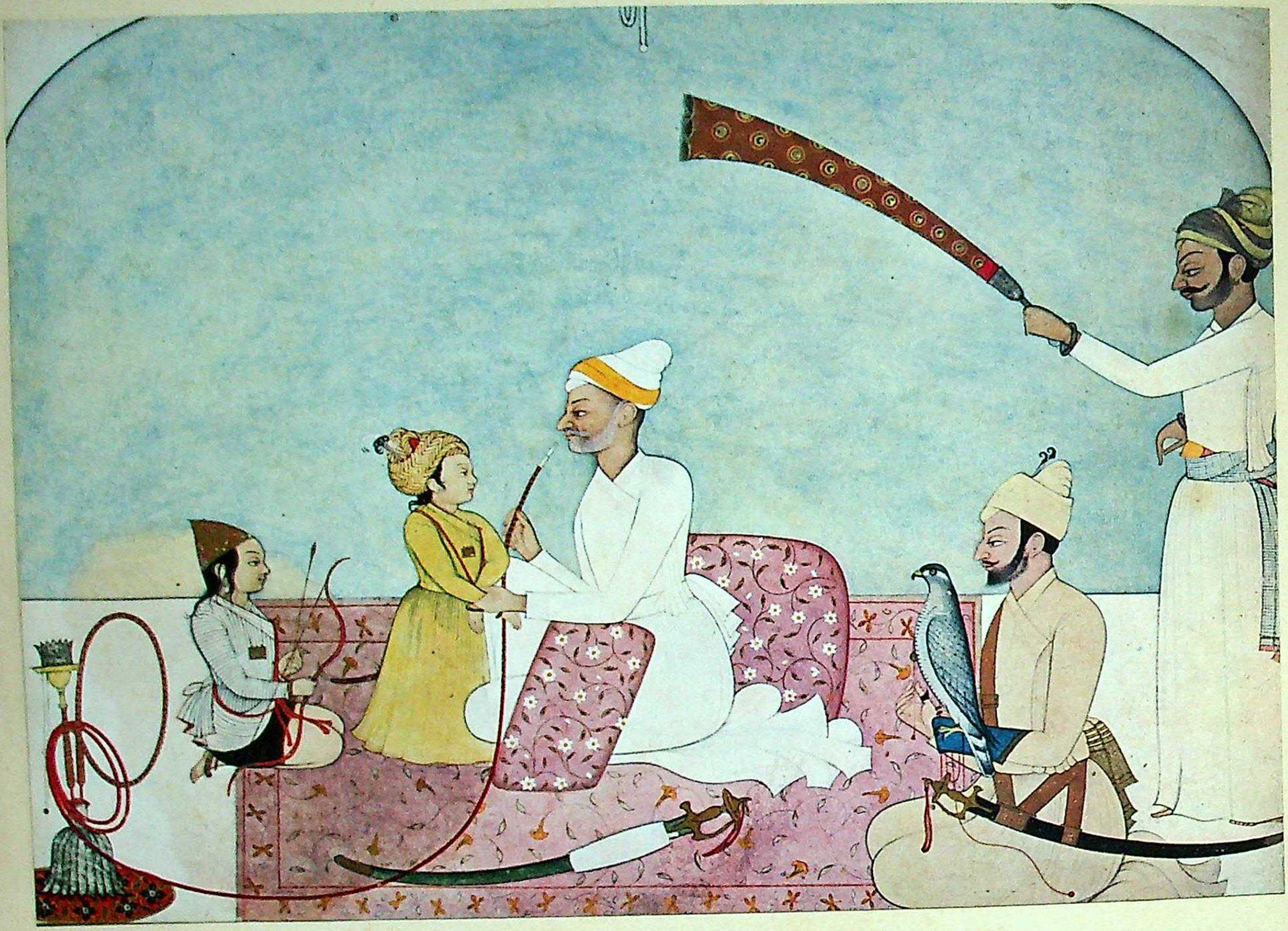
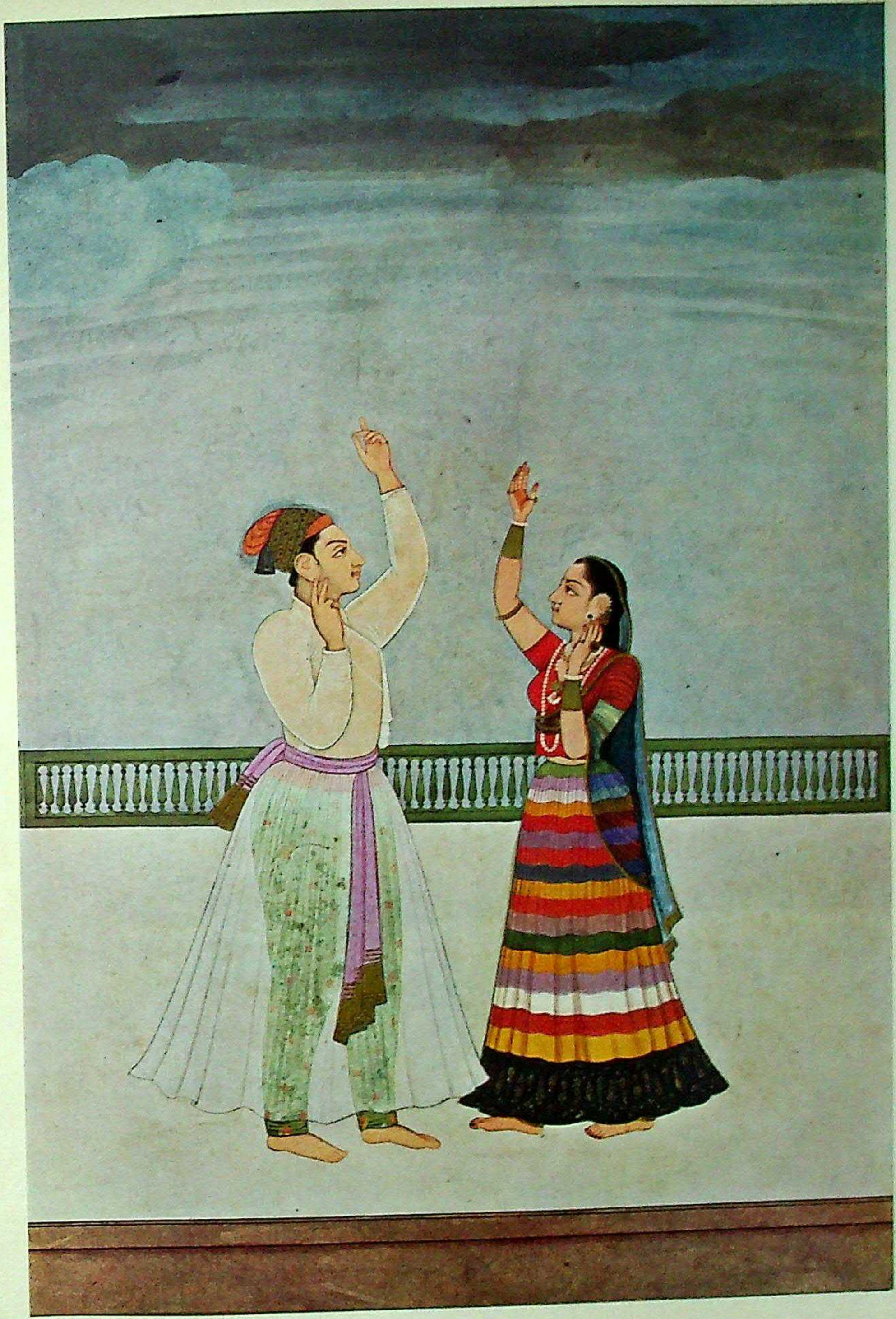
Krishna on the Swing. Guler Style, about 1750-1760. (7⅞ × 6¼″)
1948-10-9-0111, British Museum, London.



Hill Chief with Children. Guler Style, about 1760. (Miniature 7⅜ × 10½″)
13 266, s. 625, by courtesy of the Trustees, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

brother, Balwant Singh, by the artists Nainsukh of Jasrota and Vajan Sah respectively. They show the prince listening to a party of musicians and are both dated 1748. These pictures bear unmistakable traces of a Mughal trained hand of the period of Muhammad Shah. The drawing is light and delicate and naturalistic in intention. The general tones are cool and airy. The planning of the pictures depends on the receding planes of Mughal composition. It is difficult to imagine a more complete rejection of the Basohli style. Yet even at its first appearance the style is not to be mistaken for Mughal: the native taste has already, as in the parallel case of Kishangadh, left its impress. The fusion is not perhaps as complete as it is at Guler: in the Jammu pictures the predominance of the



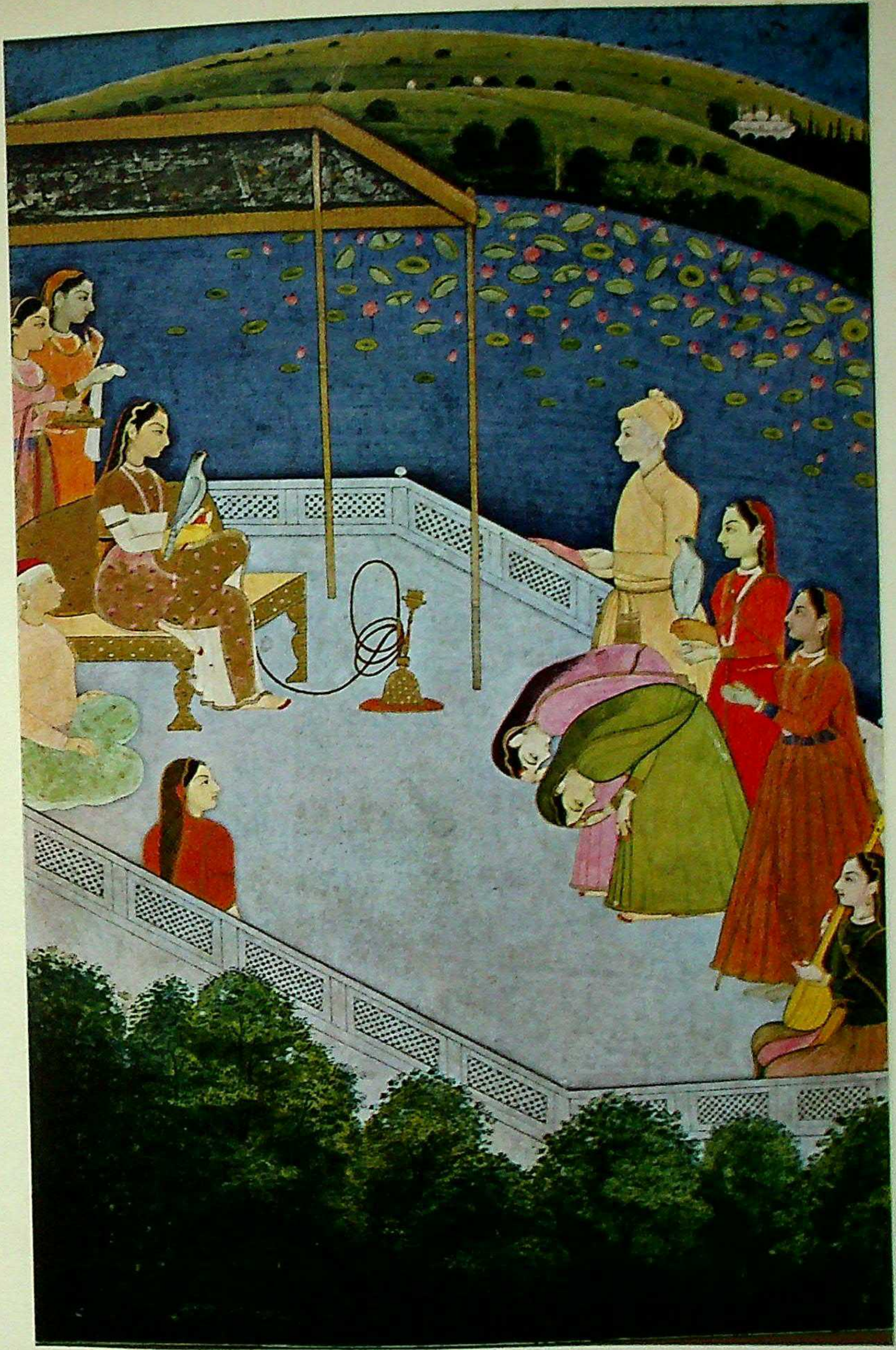
The Approaching Storm. Guler Style, about 1750-1760. (8⅞ × 6")
1948-10-9-0110, British Museum, London.

Mughal strain or the survival of the warm Basohli palette occasionally make the ingredients of the mixture a little too obvious. A fairly large group of Jammu portraits has survived, all of Balwant Singh. The youngest son of Dhrub Dev and perhaps for that reason free of the political responsibilities of Ranjit Dev, Balwant Singh seems to have been an ingenuous and amiable character, at home in the pages of his English contemporary Henry Fielding. He delighted to have his likeness painted as he busied himself unselfconsciously with the modest activities of his working day. We can see him having his beard trimmed, appraising a painting, vetting a horse, at an exhibition of dancing, or inspecting construction work on his estate, supporting his own umbrella. He grew portly with middle age and in three serene and moving pictures to be dated about 1765, he is shown at his prayers; seated in camp stripped to the waist after a hot day, doing his books; and muffled up in a blanket against the cold as he enjoys his

Illustration page 179

Govardhan Chand of Guler. Guler Style, Guler, about 1750. (7¾ × 11½″)
Allahabad Museum.

P. Ind. 74



Lady Listening to Music. Guler Style, about 1750. (9⅝ × 7½")
Jagdish Mittal Collection, Hyderabad.

last pipe before retiring. The humanity and humour of these pictures, rare in Indian painting, owes much no doubt to the quality of their subject. How far his eldest brother shared his taste for painting is not known. There is already present in the Jammu pictures, but not always perfectly realized, a new conception of feminine beauty, tall and stately, with smooth regular features set in a serious expression. Derived in some degree from Mughal painting it is already in process of adaptation to the Hill taste. The gradual exploration of the type as a means of expression will continue to obsess the Hill artist and is one of the main clues to the future development of his painting.

Illustration page 181

Here something must be said about the family of one of Balwant Singh's artists, the Nainsukh of Jasrota who painted one of the 1748 portraits. The names of three generations of this artist family are known. It is possible that Nainsukh's father Pandit Seu was a refugee artist from the Plains or Kashmir and settled in Jasrota about 1740. That he or one of his family continued to work there is suggested by a portrait, in the new style, of Mukand Dev of Jasrota, in the W. B. Manley Collection. His younger son, Nainsukh, moved to Jammu: his name appears on at least two portraits of Balwant Singh. The welter of conjecture which surrounds the careers of Nainsukh's elder brother, Manak, and their respective children will be discussed later.

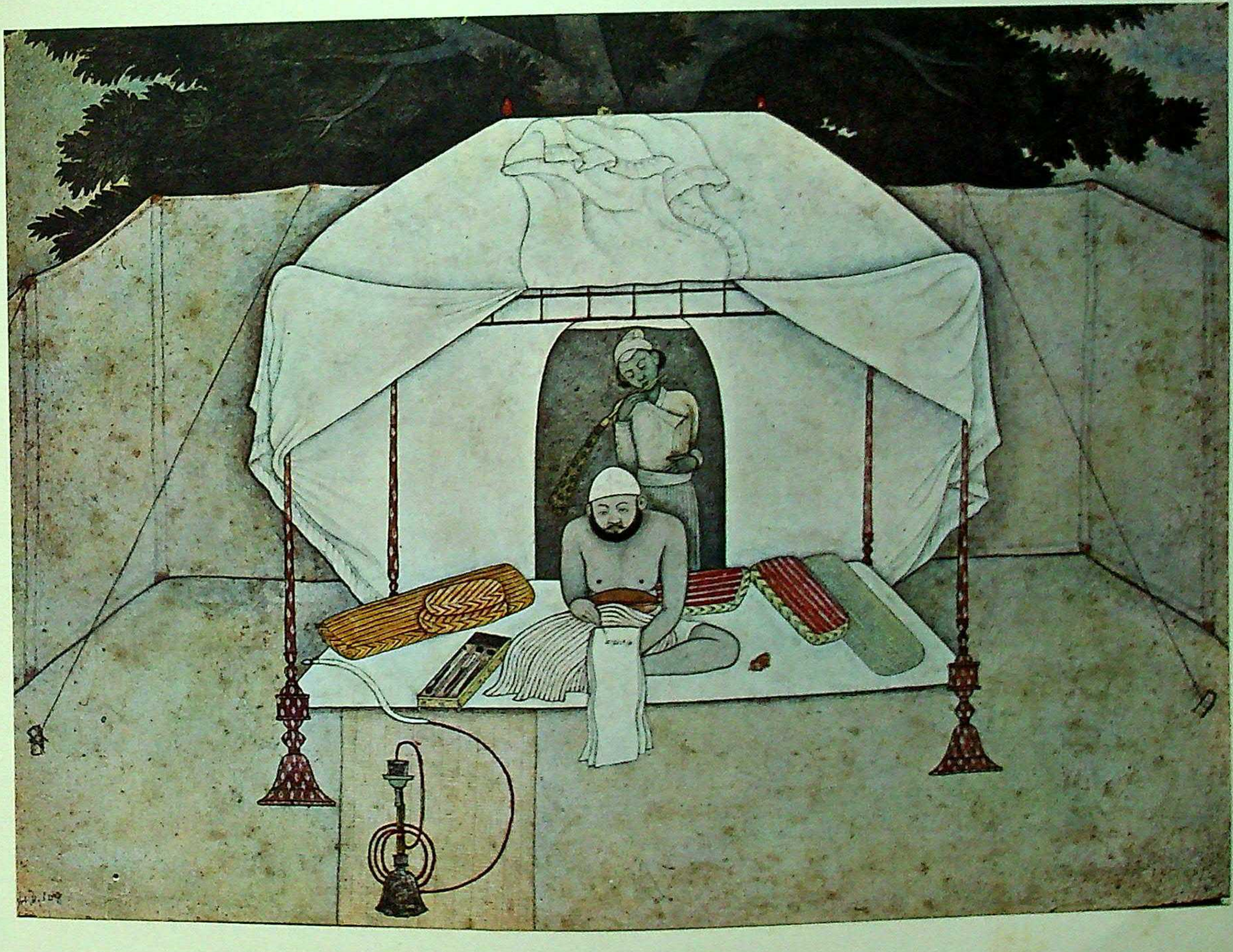
The new style which appears at Jammu by 1748 is also found at Guler in the reign of Govardhan Chand, whose dates are disputed but who seems to have ruled from about 1745 to 1773. Here again the only real evidence consists of royal portraits. None are dated, and it may be doubted whether several of the pictures in the Guler Darbar Collection, especially those representing Govardhan Chand's predecessors, are contemporary. One may well be, a spirited drawing of Dalip Singh (1694-1745) playing polo. One of Govardhan Chand's queens was a Jammu princess. Though both states were attempting the same adjustment to the Mughal manner, at Guler, even in the earliest portrait studies, the style is fully realized and accomplished. Some four or five fine and undisputed portraits of Govardhan Chand are known. The earliest, of about 1745, in the Guler Darbar Collection, shows him listening to music on a large white terrace, whose strong diagonals make an impressive design. A portrait of the same ruler with three ladies, in the Allahabad Museum, of about 1750, introduces the Guler style at its most refined and classical with lovely, fluid drawing and perfect placing. The Guler women, gracious and grave, one of India's loveliest idealizations, are handled with the same delicacy and tenderness as the Hill flowers and trees. A little later again we see Govardhan Chand with his Jammu queen and their family: a picture, in the Guler Darbar Collection, of gentle sentiment and with a beautiful treatment of children. In a fourth picture, belonging to the Panjab Museum, Chandigarh, the Chief, drawn and tired looking, is being hugged by his little daughter.

Illustration page 176

The group of pictures which has so far been associated with these Guler portraits is relatively small. They are all of the finest quality, a further reason why the title "pre-Kangra," implying as it does a transition to something superior, does little justice to the Guler style. The use of the style outside the restricting range of portraiture, in genre, the Krishna legend and religious themes generally, gave the Guler artist an

Illustrations pages 173, 174, 175 and 177 opportunity to develop his sense of romantic landscape, based on the village scenes and mountain flora of his everyday observation. The Krishna story especially is set down with candid sentiment: the mood is never forced or mawkish. The distinctive Guler idealization of young men and women features in all the pictures, the women losing a little of their gravity as they contemplate the activities of the divine boy. The more precise dating of these pictures within the period of the Guler style, about 1740 to 1770, is disputed, but, for reasons now to be given, the earliest possible dates in each case are favoured here. It must however again be emphasized that none of this

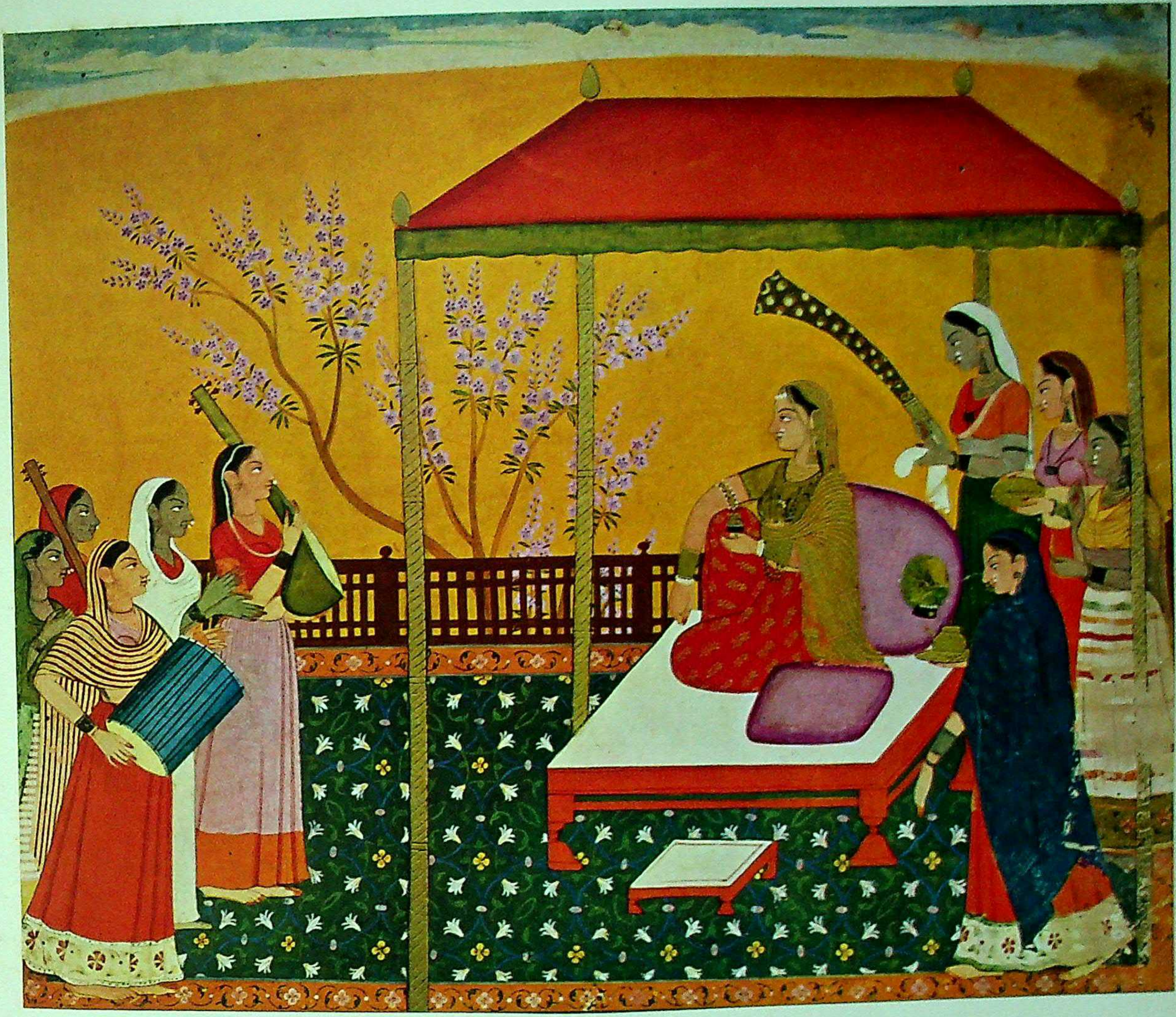
Balwant Singh of Jammu. Guler Style, Jammu, about 1765. (8⅜ × 11⅜″)
No. 43.108, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.



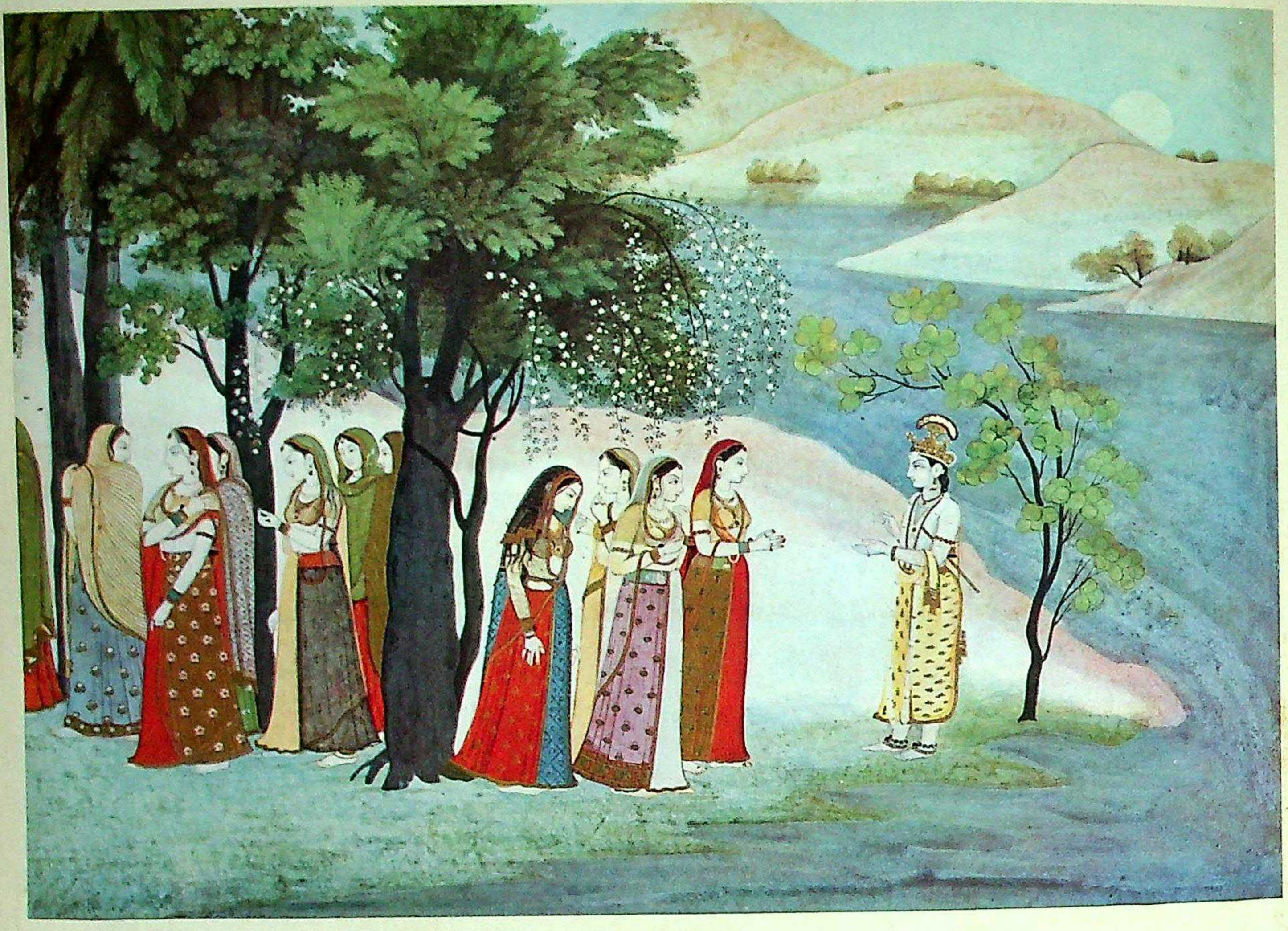
group can be attributed with certainty to Guler State. They are in the Guler style, which may have been practised at other centres, though there is no indisputable evidence at present available that it was so.

Afghan power in the Panjab came to an end soon after 1767, when the Hill States were confronted by an enemy nearer home. The Sikhs had already formed themselves into twelve confederacies, which preceded their consolidation into one nation by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and were beginning to feel their strength. The Kangra group of states was the first to suffer, Kangra, Guler and Chamba being made tributary in 1770 towards the end of the reign of Ghamand Chand. The latter's grandson, Sansar Chand, succeeded in 1775 at the age of ten, and in the earlier part of his reign in 1783, Kangra Fort was surrendered by its Mughal governor to the Sikhs. Defeated on the plains the Sikhs suddenly withdrew from the Hills and in 1786 Sansar Chand occupied the Fort, revived Kangra's claim to the headship of the Trigarta Group, and began to encroach on the territories of all the neighbouring Chiefs. For about twenty years he enjoyed a power and a reputation beyond that of any earlier Hill Chief. His ambition seems even to have included the plains of the Panjab from which he was driven back in 1804 by Ranjit Singh. Finally the Hill Chiefs formed a confederacy against him and, through the Raja of Bilaspur, called in the Gurkhas to their aid. For four years Kangra Fort was besieged. Finally in desperation Sansar Chand asked for help from Ranjit Singh. In 1809 the Gurkhas were driven out, Ranjit Singh took possession of the Fort and the old Mughal demesne, and Kangra and the associated states became feudatories of Lahore. Sansar Chand survived until 1823, living modestly at Alampur, on the right bank of the Beas.

From about 1770 to the end of Sansar Chand's reign in 1823—its survival into the second half of the nineteenth century does not concern us here—there flourished in the Hills a style of painting called by common consent the Kangra Style. It will be convenient to retain this name for the third period of Hill painting, with the same reservations as the titles Basohli and Guler for the early and middle periods. It has not however their validity: its usage is due to the fact that Kangra was the great power in the Hills from 1786 to 1805. During these good years Sansar Chand is said to have kept a splendid court. Later, in 1820, he is reported by the English traveller Moorcroft who visited him at Alampur as fond of drawing, with many artists in his employ and a large collection of religious pictures and portraits. On this evidence much has been made of him as a great patron. Now the only pictures which can be associated with the Kangra style under Sansar Chand, if the same standards of evidence are applied as in the two earlier periods, are the portraits. They range over the period 1780 to 1805, are generally accepted as contemporary and as representative of at least one of the Kangra studios. They are all of indifferent quality. Karl Khandalawala, who takes a more realistic view of Sansar Chand, suggests that he had some taste, if no discrimination, and in his efforts to attract talent from outside must have gathered something good in his net. Mr Khandalawala's difficulty and that of all students of this period is that they attribute to the Kangra style at Sansar Chand's court two quite separate groups of paintings. The first of these Mr Khandalawala has called the Standard type on the basis of the profiles of the women, the nose almost



Lady Listening to Music. Guler Style, Jammu, about 1750. (8½ × 10″)
1955-10-9-051, British Museum, London.



Bhagavata Purana: Krishna and Gopis. Guler Style, about 1760-1765. (8 × 11¼")
Madhuri Desai Collection, Bombay.

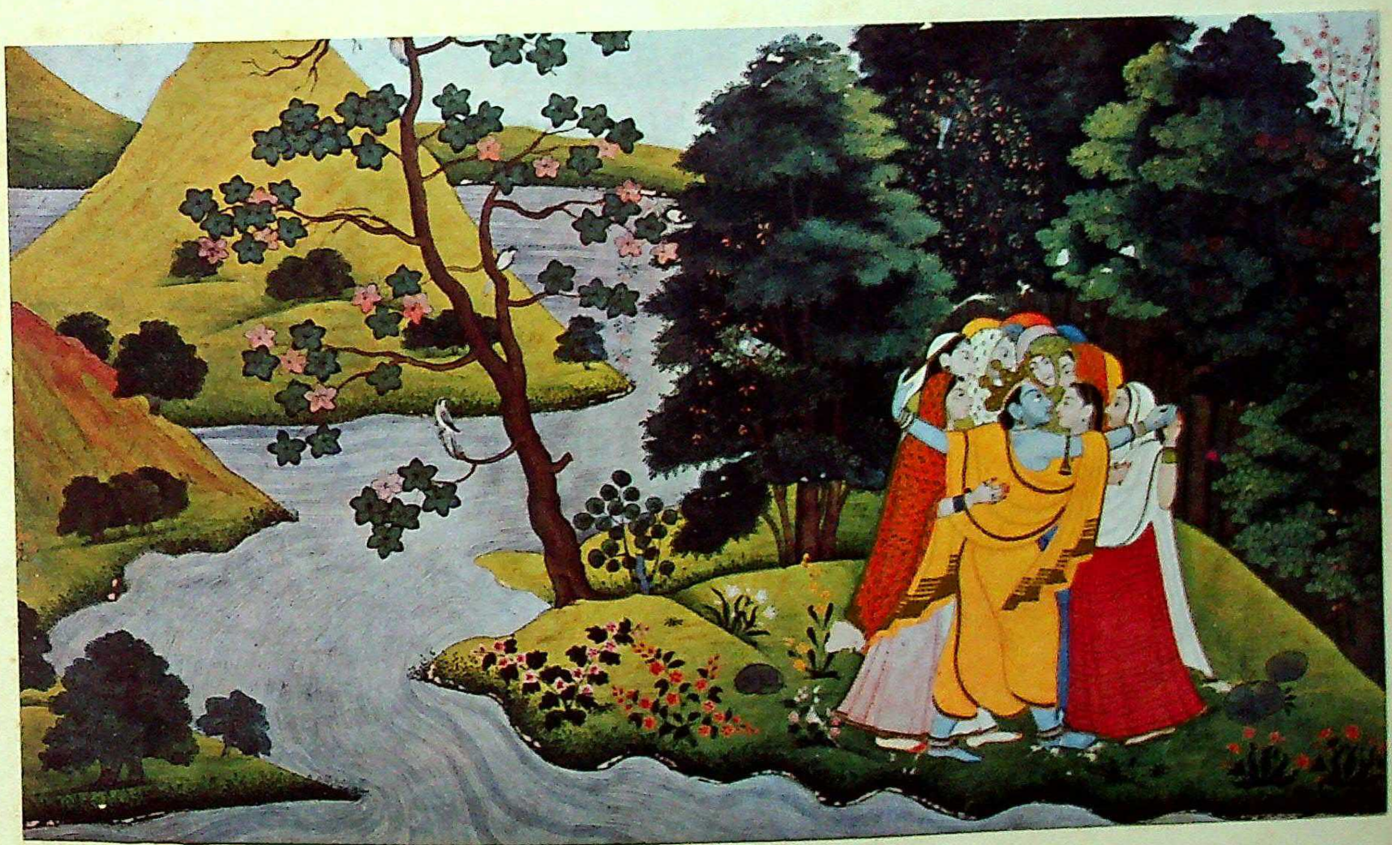
Illustration page 184 in line with the forehead, long narrow eyes and sharp chin, no modelling of the face and the hair treated as a flat black mass with no shading. This type appears in nine out of ten so-called Kangra paintings of whatever quality and in those Sansar Chand portraits where women are present. The women of the second group are called the *Bhagavata* type. One cannot better Mr Khandalawala's description: "The face is well modelled and shaded so judiciously that it possesses an almost porcelain-like delicacy. The nose is small and slightly upturned and the hair is carefully painted." On this group of paintings, without exception comparable in quality to the Guler masterpieces, rests the real reputation of Kangra painting. The group includes a dispersed *Bhagavata Purana*, which gives Illustration above

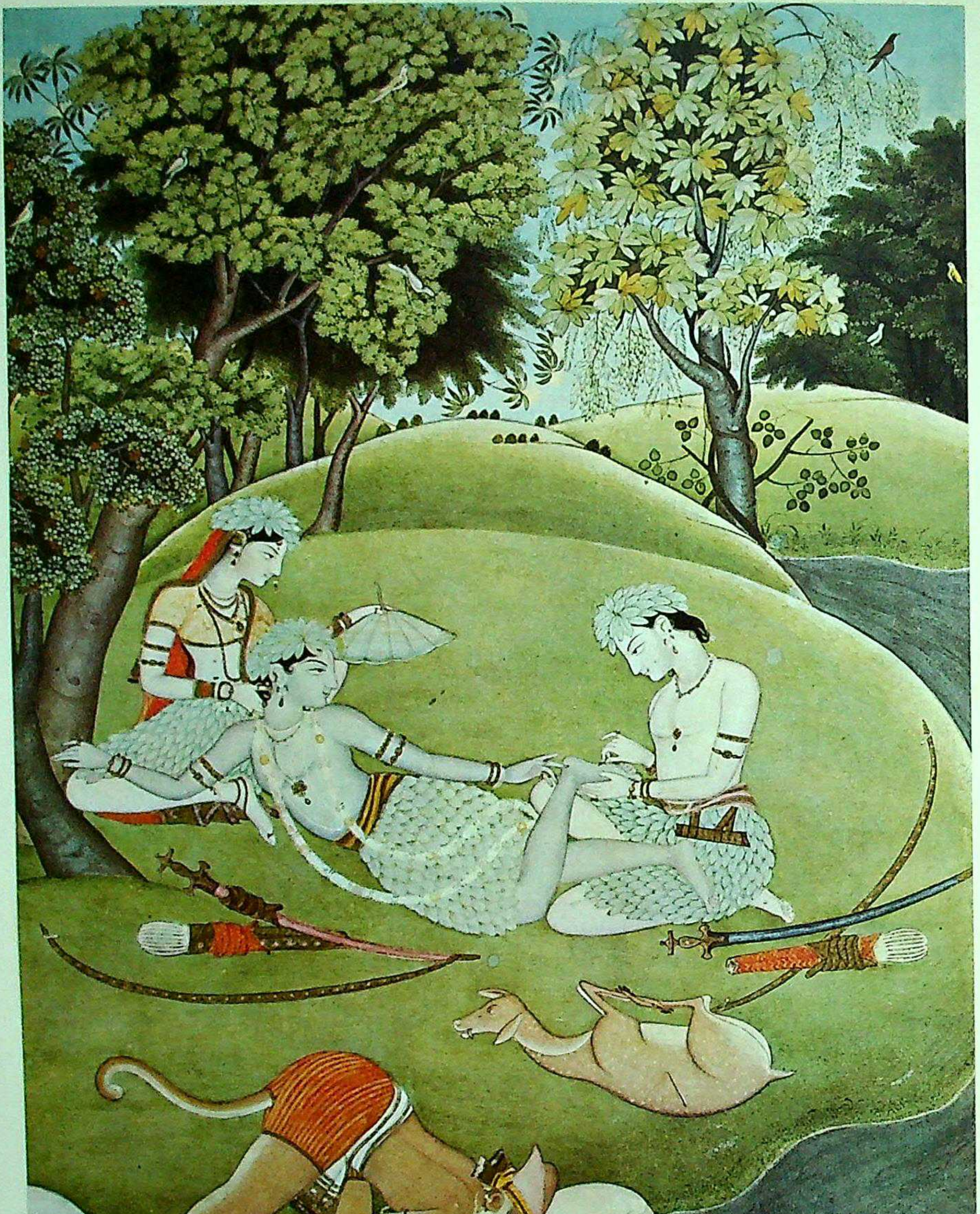
Illustration below

the name to the female type; a *Gita Govinda*, mainly in the collection of the Tehri-Garhwal Darbar; a *Satsaiya* (Seven Hundred Couplets on the love of Krishna and Radha, by the seventeenth century poet Bihari Lal) in the same collection; a *Ragamala* in the National Museum, New Delhi; and a *Baramasa* (Twelve Seasons) in the collection of the Lambagraon Darbar. Many separate paintings and drawings have also survived. Of course the difference in female profile is not the only feature which distinguishes the two groups, which represent two separate worlds in style and quality. Yet such is the power of Sansar Chand's name that the *Bhagavata* Group is attributed by all students to Kangra of the period 1780 or 1790 to 1800, together with the earliest and best of the Standard Group. A natural embarrassment at this juxtaposition forces most students to edge the Standard Group into the last decade of the eighteenth century or later.

It does not seem to be difficult to date the introduction of the Standard Kangra style if the pictures are allowed to speak for themselves. In the collection of the late N. C. Mehta is a portrait of the young Raj Singh of Chamba watching a girl dancing,

Gita Govinda: Krishna embracing Gopis. Guler Style, about 1760-1765. (5¾ ×9⅞″)
No. 11, N. C. Mehta Collection, Bombay.





Rama and Sita in the Forest. Kangra Style, about 1780. ($8\frac{3}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{4}''$)
Mrs Douglas Barrett Collection, Drayton Parslow.

which can be fairly closely dated to 1772. Karl Khandalawala has accurately placed the style of this picture. It has all the quality of composition and refinement of drawing of the late Guler Style, but the profile of the dancing girl is of the Standard Kangra type at its earliest and most expressive. We are present at the very moment of transition. The situation at Guler is similar, though a little more developed, in the early reign of Govardhan Chand's successor Prakash Chand (1773-1790). In a small group of portraits of Prakash Chand, his queen, a Chamba princess, and their young son Bhup Singh, all to be dated about 1773 to 1775, the Standard Kangra profile is employed. These pictures are of good quality, and in one portrait of Prakash Chand, in the late N. C. Mehta's collection, the late Guler Style profile puts in a single appearance. At Kangra itself there is no direct evidence of painting under Ghamand Chand, as has already been said. The five known portraits of him can hardly be regarded as contemporary. There is however in the collection of Sir Cowasji Jehangir a *Ramayana* series, on the reverse of every miniature of which appears the date 1769. It is a strange, uneven series, which if accepted as evidence shows the end of a version of the Guler Style and the beginnings of the Standard Kangra. If painted at Kangra itself, for which there is no evidence, it suggests a low level of achievement. It seems then that the Standard Kangra Style had already made an appearance in the Kangra group of states by 1770 to 1775, when it can be seen, at least in the Chamba and Guler portraits, developing out of the Guler Style. To the several varieties of Standard Kangra pictures, a few of which can be plausibly isolated and placed in one or other of the Kangra group of States, it is now intended to restrict the title "Kangra Style". It is implicit in all arguments on this period that the *Bhagavata* Group is also a natural and straightforward development from the Guler Style. The recognition of this fact and the insistence on a Kangra provenance and Sansar Chand date for the group have led several scholars to invent elaborate peregrinations for the Pandit Seu family of artists. Since versions of the Guler Style are found in Guler and Jammu, Nainsukh of Jasrota is made to paint for a while at Guler, go to Jammu for a term, and then return to Guler. His elder brother Manak leaves Jasrota for Guler, and about 1790, by which time this Titian of the Hills would probably be rising eighty, with his son Kaushala abandons Guler for the court of Sansar Chand in order to paint the dispersed *Bhagavata* and the *Gita Govinda*. It is hardly necessary to say that this curious diaspora. evidently based on the assumption that there was only one family of artists serving the Hills, is wholly imaginary. If artists had, in fact, abandoned Guler for Kangra about 1790, they would on present evidence have left a state which had already for some fifteen years adopted the Kangra Style for another which had probably done the same. We would then be asked to imagine in both Guler and Kangra two schools of artists working side by side yet in isolation: one, small in number, producing the splendid extension of the Guler Style, which is the *Bhagavata* Group; the other, much larger, painting with the rapidly diminishing range and coarsening of line and colour of the Kangra Style. A solution is simple. The *Bhagavata* Group is an integral part of the Guler Style: it is indeed its final triumphant expression. At Guler and Chamba the great moment was over soon after 1770. Consequently the whole of the *Bhagavata* Group must be placed in the preceding decade. After 1770 the Kangra Style spread through the Kangra group of states, a smaller achievement altogether but deriving such qualities as it had from the final phase of the Guler Style. It is doubtful whether the best examples of the Kangra Style are later than 1790. Little that is useful can be said of the place of origin of the *Bhagavata* Group. There is some reason to believe that the *Gita Govinda* and *Satsaiya* series belonged at one time to the Kangra court. The *Baramasa* series is still with the Lambagraon Darbar. To an artist named Manak is attributed the famous *Blindman's Buff*, now in the collection of the Tehri-Garhwal Darbar, which is considered by some to belong to the *Bhagavata* Group. Manak is a common name but it is not impossible that he is Nainsukh's elder brother, who would have been about forty-five when the picture was painted, if the dating proposed here is correct. Some scholars believe that Manak's son Kaushala is the Kushan Lal whom "tradition" reports as Sansar Chand's favourite painter. No pictures attributed to either name survive. It would perhaps be perverse on this slender evidence to countenance a claim for Kangra as the source of the *Bhagavata* Group, and it seems best at the moment to label these pictures "Guler Style 1760 to 1770." Nevertheless the silent and pictureless court of Ghamand Chand, especially during the secure years from 1748 to 1770, remains a challenge, and it will be no surprise if new evidence compels us to place the *Bhagavata* Group in Kangra State itself. The place of origin of the Kangra Style is equally obscure. The earliest evidence of the style seems to be at Chamba, followed closely by Guler. The Chamba portrait of Raj Singh is a much finer thing and closer to the *Bhagavata* Group than the Guler portraits. No doubt the Kangra Style was adopted simultaneously in several centres, including Kangra. It was after all not so much a new departure as a general falling away from the vision which had sustained the Guler Style. However it is fair to say, if the interpretation given here is correct, of the two groups of pictures hitherto associated with the Kangra court and Sansar Chand's years of power from 1786 to 1805, the *Bhagavata* Group had already been painted before he came to the throne at the age of ten in 1775, and the Kangra Style had already begun and was entering upon its decline at the earliest moment when he, at the age of twenty, could have exercised effective patronage. A final word may be said about the family of Pandit Seu. Though there is no evidence whatever that Manak, Kaushala or Nainsukh were associated with Guler, there is some small indication that Nainsukh's second and third sons Gauhu and Nikka were painting in Kangra Style at Guler in the last decade of the eighteenth century; Nainsukh's youngest son Ram Lal may be the Ram Sahai responsible for the Chamba portrait of Raj Singh.

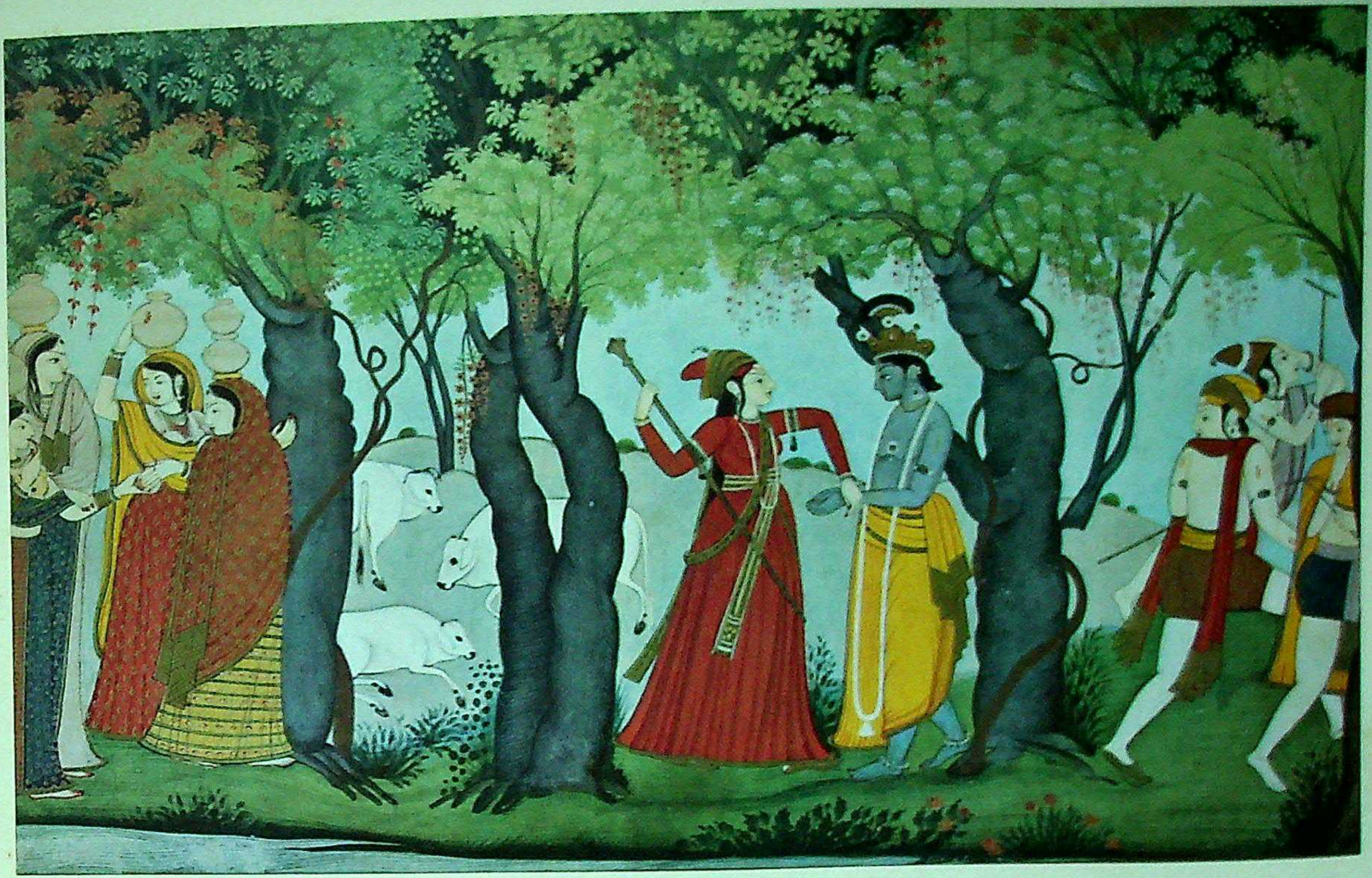
When A. K. Coomaraswamy, its earliest appreciator, first attempted a history of the painting of the Panjab Hills, he divided the pictures into two styles, of Jammu and of Kangra. No one would insist on this division now, but it still retains a certain general validity. The centre of diffusion of the Basohli Style was on present evidence almost certainly the Jammu group of states, though there is reason to believe that variants of the style existed in the Kangra group also at Nurpur, Chamba, Mandi, Kulu and possibly Kangra itself. For the precise dating of these provincial variants, if that is what they are, there is little evidence.The Guler Style cannot as yet be placed confidently except in

Guler and Jammu. The history of the painting of the Jammu group in the Guler Style period is obscure apart from Jammu State itself, and of the latter nothing is known after about 1770. The Kangra Style was practised in the Kangra group of states at Chamba, Guler, Kangra, Nurpur and Mandi. We must now turn to another artistic province further to the south-east, which for our purposes comprises the Simla group of states and Garhwal. All scholars believe that the painting of this region, at least that of Garhwal, is closely dependent on that of the Kangra group, and can only be explained with reference to it. During the past two decades this view has produced theory and counter-theory until both the style and the chronology have become even more obscured than in the Guler-Kangra problem. Here an attempt will be made to treat the painting of this province on its own merits as a separate entity, which its quality certainly demands. It is believed that a reasonable solution is then possible.

The chief principality in the Simla group of states is Kahlur (Bilaspur), which lies in the outer Hills in the Lower Sutlej Valley, which divides the state roughly into two. The state is said to have been founded by a cadet branch of the Candellas of Bundelkhand. The ancient capital Kot-Kahlur was abandoned for Bilaspur on the left bank of the Sutlej about 1645. The local petty chiefs of the Simla group rendered feudal service and continued, it is said, to pay tribute to Bilaspur up to the beginning of British rule in 1815. The seventeenth century history of Bilaspur, dynastic troubles and quarrels with neighbouring states following the usual pattern, does not concern us. Ajmer Chand (1712-1741) had a peaceful reign: he married princesses from Garhwal and Sirmur, an important state to the south of Bilaspur. Ajmer Chand's son and successor Devi Chand (1741-1778) was a contemporary of Ghamand Chand of Kangra to whom he lent assistance during an invasion of Kangra by the state of Jaswan. Bilaspur enjoyed great prosperity in his reign, being the first station on the reopened Hill route to Kashmir, and many people from the Plains came to settle. Devi Chand, like Ghamand Chand, felt strong enough to recover those tracts of his territory which had been confiscated by the Mughals. It is evident, from the recent investigations of Svetoslav Roerich and Karl Khandalawala, that there was a very important school of painting in the Bilaspur region during the reign of Devi Chand. As yet the material available to form an assessment of the beginning of this school is small, consisting of a group of large illustrations to the *Bhagavata Purana*, in the Svetoslav Roerich Collection. One of the *Bhagavata* pages bears the name of the artist Kishenchand, who, "tradition" claims, worked at the court of Devi Chand about 1750. These pictures exhibit a transformation of the Mughal style by Hill taste parallel to that taking place further west in the Kangra group of states, but they have reached a stage of development rather less advanced than that of the great Guler Style *Bhagavata*. However, apart from the obvious points of resemblance due to the general vision of the Hills working on a common source, the two styles have little in common. The colour of the Bilaspur pictures is less soft and muted, the transitions from tone to tone more abrupt. The line is drier and has a more masculine, vigorous quality. The brilliant compositions are designed to stress movement and energy. Inferior perhaps in poetic content, the Bilaspur paintings excel the Guler Style masterpieces in purely pictorial qualities. As

Karl Khandalawala remarks, they come closest of all Hill paintings to the spirit of true book illustration. The artist had one or two easily recognized tricks of style, a fondness for gold on the flying scarves and girdles of his cowherds and indeed dappled on their charges, and an absorption in the gnarled and knotted shapes of the trunks of trees. The Bilaspur adjustment to the Mughal Style is so individual that an attempt to suggest influence from other parts of the Hills is quite superfluous. The discoverers of this style have suggested a date of about 1750 to 1775 for the *Bhagavata* series. This is entirely acceptable, but it is preferred here to place it a little earlier than the Guler Style *Bhagavata*, about 1750 to 1760; a date supported by the appearance of a flat, provincial version of the style in portraits of Raja Tedhi Singh of Kulu of about 1760. The reasons for the attribution of the Roerich *Bhagavata* to Bilaspur State have not yet been given—it is no doubt based on the place where the pictures were acquired and local tradition—but since Bilaspur was the chief of the Simla group of states the title Bilaspur Style may be allowed to stand for this general region. Nothing further has been attributed to the Bilaspur Style except a handful of pictures in the collection of the Raja of Bilaspur, which have been placed in the reign of Mahan Chand (1778-1824), who succeeded at the age of six. The rani, perhaps because of Kangra encroachments, gave help to the Mughal governor of Kangra Fort when it was besieged by the Sikhs and Sansar Chand. The latter took his revenge in 1795 and seized all Bilaspur north of the Sutlej. The petty chiefs had already declared their independence in 1793, and the chief of nearby Nalagadh invaded the territory and burnt the capital. Mahan Chand, a weak and profligate ruler, called in the Gurkhas in 1804: they continued to occupy Bilaspur until driven out by the British in 1814. We will return to Bilaspur in a moment.

After Kangra perhaps the best-known name in Hill painting is that of Garhwal, the western district of Kumaon, with its capital at Srinagar on the Alakananda River. Our period is covered by four Chiefs, Pradip Shah (1717-1772), Lalat Shah (1772-1780), Jayakrit Shah (1780-1785) and Pradhuman Shah (1785-1803). The last was driven out of his state by the Gurkhas and died fighting them in 1804. The Gurkhas remained in Garhwal until driven out by the British in 1814. Little is known of the history of these rulers and nothing of their interest in painting. The basis of Garhwal's reputation as a centre of painting is twofold, the personality of Molaram, and the contents of his collection of paintings. Molaram was the descendant of a family of Mughal painters who settled in Garhwal about the middle of the seventeenth century. Born about 1740, he was a man of many small parts. He seems to have had a reputation in Garhwal as a diplomat, and probably visited Kangra of which he prepared a map. He was also something of a trimmer and got along well with the Gurkha governor during the occupation, and later with the British. He painted, and was in the habit of dating his paintings and inscribing them with jeremiads in verse, which indicate that neither he nor his paintings were appreciated by his contemporaries. This is not surprising, since his paintings never rise above the level of lifeless versions and copies of other men's work. Molaram's paintings, if accepted at their face value, are for this reason of some use to the historian. His earliest fully dated work of 1771, a courtesan drinking wine, is in the late Mughal manner current no doubt



Radha arresting Krishna. Bilaspur Style, about 1765-1770. (Miniature 6⅝ × 10⅝")
R 13 282, s. 680, by courtesy of the Trustees, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

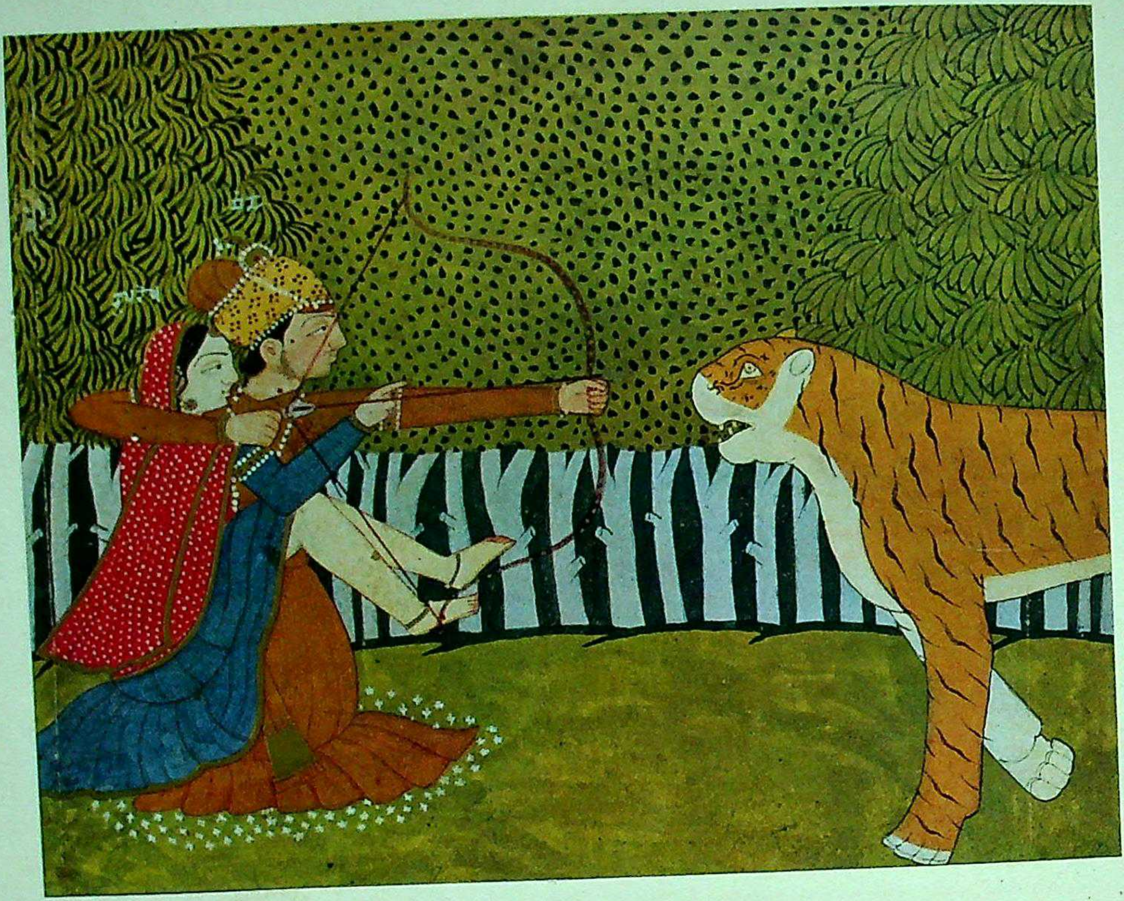
in his family. His *Girl and Peacock*, dated 1775, and *Girl and Partridge*, dated 1795, are stiff and clumsy versions of Kangra Style paintings. The first, at least, emphasizes that the Kangra Style was in existence in 1775. His set of *Nayikas*, in the collection of the Garhwal Darbar, dated 1810, are grotesque copies of well-known paintings on which Garhwal's reputation rests. It is fair to assume that Molaram was ineptly copying pictures in his collection. That he had a collection is certain: it was inherited by his great grandsons Balak Ram and Tulsi Ram, whence it found its way into museums and private collections within and outside India. It contained several copies, sometimes attributed to Molaram, of well-known masterpieces, chief among which are Manak's *Blindman's Buff* already mentioned, and the famous *Varsa Vihara*, Krishna and Radha sheltering against the rain under one cloak. The collection also contained—and this is the crux of the problem—many of the dozen or so masterpieces attributed to the Garhwal School. To all authorities this school, its style and chronology, is an embarrassment. But none is prepared to deny its existence. Molaram's efforts can obviously not be used to explain the origin of the small group of great paintings. Consequently artists have been brought from outside, at great expense of ink and paper, to execute the Garhwal paintings and then to depart elsewhere. For Rai Krishnadasa and Karl Khandalawala the Garhwal masterpieces were painted not by Garhwal artists but by immigrants from Sansar Chand's court between 1800 and the Gurkha occupation of 1803. During their brief sojourn at Garhwal the local landscape "imparted a definite individuality" to the style of these Kangra artists, who were in any case, according to Karl Khandalawala, working in the Kangra Style of 1780 to 1800, that is, in terms of the chronology proposed here, of 1760 to 1770. Similarly W. G. Archer introduces artists from Guler about 1770 on the basis of the marriage of Pradhuman Shah with a Guler princess, and places the great pictures between 1775 and 1785. Unfortunately there was no such marriage, the statement being due to a confusion with an alliance between the two families in the second half of the nineteenth century. In spite of this theory of immigration from Guler, Mr Archer has something very pertinent to say of the Garhwal style: "It is so authentic and individual that while there is certainly a marked affinity with Kangra art, the sense of any close dependence is wanting. It is rather as parallel developments from the same artistic source that the two styles must be regarded." This is a precise assessment of the status of the Garhwal masterpieces. But the theories of Kangra or Guler immigration make it clear that no one believes that the Garhwal painter himself was capable of developing this common artistic source. Further it is difficult to accept, when in 1810 and perhaps earlier he was copying Garhwal masterpieces, Molaram and his patrons were so destitute of eye and feeling as to believe that he was reproducing in style and quality the paintings of men who had worked around them at some time in their adult life. One is forced to conclude that his "Garhwal" no less than his "Kangra" pictures were copies of idioms foreign to him and to Garhwal: in other words, his collection was simply a private collection, without even the authority of a state collection. Consequently there is every reason to believe that the Garhwal School did not exist except on the level of the paintings of the Molaram family, and of course later in the nineteenth century and at the new capital of Tehri, a quite different story which does not concern us here directly.

It is possible to compare the development of the "Garhwal" masterpieces step by step with that of the Guler Style *Bhagavata* Group. The *Gita Govinda* and the *Bhagavata Purana* of the Guler Style, the two earliest works of the *Bhagavata* Group, are each matched by a "Garhwal" page, the so-called *Gaicharan Lila* in the National Museum, New Delhi, and the *Kaliya Damana* (Krishna dancing in triumph on the heads of the snake whose poison was fouling the River Jumna), in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. A comparison of the two styles shows the justice of Mr Archer's estimate of the "Garhwal" pictures. Stemming from the same source they have reached exactly the same stage along two parallel but quite distinct lines of development. Perhaps it is not too jejune to call the "Garhwal" a masculine style, the other a feminine. Even in a comparatively quiet scene like the *Gaicharan Lila* the line and composition are wiry and taut, and there is an emphasis on strong, expressive pose and gesture, and on movement. Typically it is not the evening stillness that the artist has chosen to interpret but the movement of the freshening breeze which runs through his picture and arches the flowering trees towards the struggling Radha. The *Bhagavata* Group *Kaliya Damana*, now in the National Museum, New Dehli, admirable though it is, has not the vitality and design and sense of scale of the Boston version, one of the finest pictures painted in the Hills. The faces also of the "Garhwal" men and women have a keener, aquiline profile quite unlike the softly rounded contours of the *Bhagavata* Group ideal. The two "Garhwal" pictures, not perhaps all that remains of two great series, may be dated with their *Bhagavata* Group counterparts to 1760 to 1765.

Two further pictures may be associated with this period of "Garhwal" painting, and both of them are of superlative quality: Manak's *Blindman's Buff*, in the collection of the Garhwal Darbar, and the *Feast in the Forest*, in the Panjab Museum. The first is often placed with the *Bhagavata* Group, but it has all the pictorial qualities which we associate with "Garhwal." The second, in many ways the most impressive of all "Garhwal" pictures, has been published as Kangra by M. S. Randhawa. Karl Khandalawala has expressed the view that it is probably Bilaspur. If this brilliant attribution is allowed to stand the Garhwal problem is well on its way to a reasonable solution. We have already seen at Bilaspur a *Bhagavata Purana* with precisely those ingredients of style which we have emphasized in the earliest "Garhwal" pictures. If the "Garhwal" pictures are in fact from the Bilaspur region, we can then see two parallel developments from the same source, namely the impact of the Mughal style about 1740 on the stations along the Hill road, in two neighbouring regions, the Kangra group of states and Bilaspur. Parallel development but perhaps not entirely exclusive. It may be more than coincidence that the *Gita Govinda* series of the two styles are remarkable for glowing colour, the *Bhagavata Purana* for the quality of their drawing, and that each seems to have the same size and format as its counterpart. One gets the impression of two markedly individual styles, each with an eye on the other. Devi Chand of Bilaspur, during his long and prosperous reign, was on friendly terms with his neighbour Ghamand Chand of Kangra and came to his assistance on at least one occasion. If the dates and interpretation suggested here are correct, the artists of one ruler may well have been instructed to rival two of the most notable productions of the other's: a reason, perhaps, for believing that the *Bhagavata* Group was painted in Kangra itself.

The mood of the slightly later group of paintings within the *Bhagavata* Style, the *Satsaiya*, *Baramasa* and *Ragamala* series, is also reflected in a small group of paintings in the Bilaspur Style, if this title may now be used to replace "Garhwal." One of the loveliest is the picture in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, showing Radha with a policeman's turban and truncheon apprehending Krishna. The Bilaspur artist's essays in this more romantic manner retain the dramatic power of the earlier pictures, as in the Abhisarika Nayika, in the British Museum, hurrying to her lover through the dark forest. He was particularly aware of the beauty the moon gave to his Hills; the *Baz Bahadur and Rupmati*, in the Kasturbhai Lalbhai Collection, is bathed in its light. These pictures, to be dated about 1765 to 1770, are again few, but superior, many will think, to the

Illustration page 189



Madhu-Malati: The Resourceful Lover. Bilaspur Style, Kulu Valley, dated 1799. (4⅞ × 6⅛″)
Jagdish Mittal Collection, Hyderabad.

contemporary work of the Guler Style artists. About 1770 the vision of the Guler Style began to fail. It is probable that the great Bilaspur Style suffered similarly, though it may have survived until the death of Devi Chand in 1778. The exact moment of transition, the equivalent in the Kangra group of states of the Chamba portrait of Raj Singh, is represented at Bilaspur by a picture, in the collection of the Raja of Bilaspur, called by M. S. Randhawa *Driving the Flock*. It is a picture with good passages: the children have the authentic Bilaspur Style stance and vitality, but the design is weak and the splendid Bilaspur women have become merely another version of their Kangra Style sisters, seen and painted just this side of sentimentality. Several pretty pictures, in the Raja of Bilaspur's collection, have survived from the last two decades of the century, when some very lively and attractive variants of the style were also developed in the neighbouring states, especially in the Kulu Valley.

Illustration above

By 1800 the spirit which had sustained Hill painting for over a century was spent. Patronized by the Sikhs and others the Kangra Style took another long century to die.

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